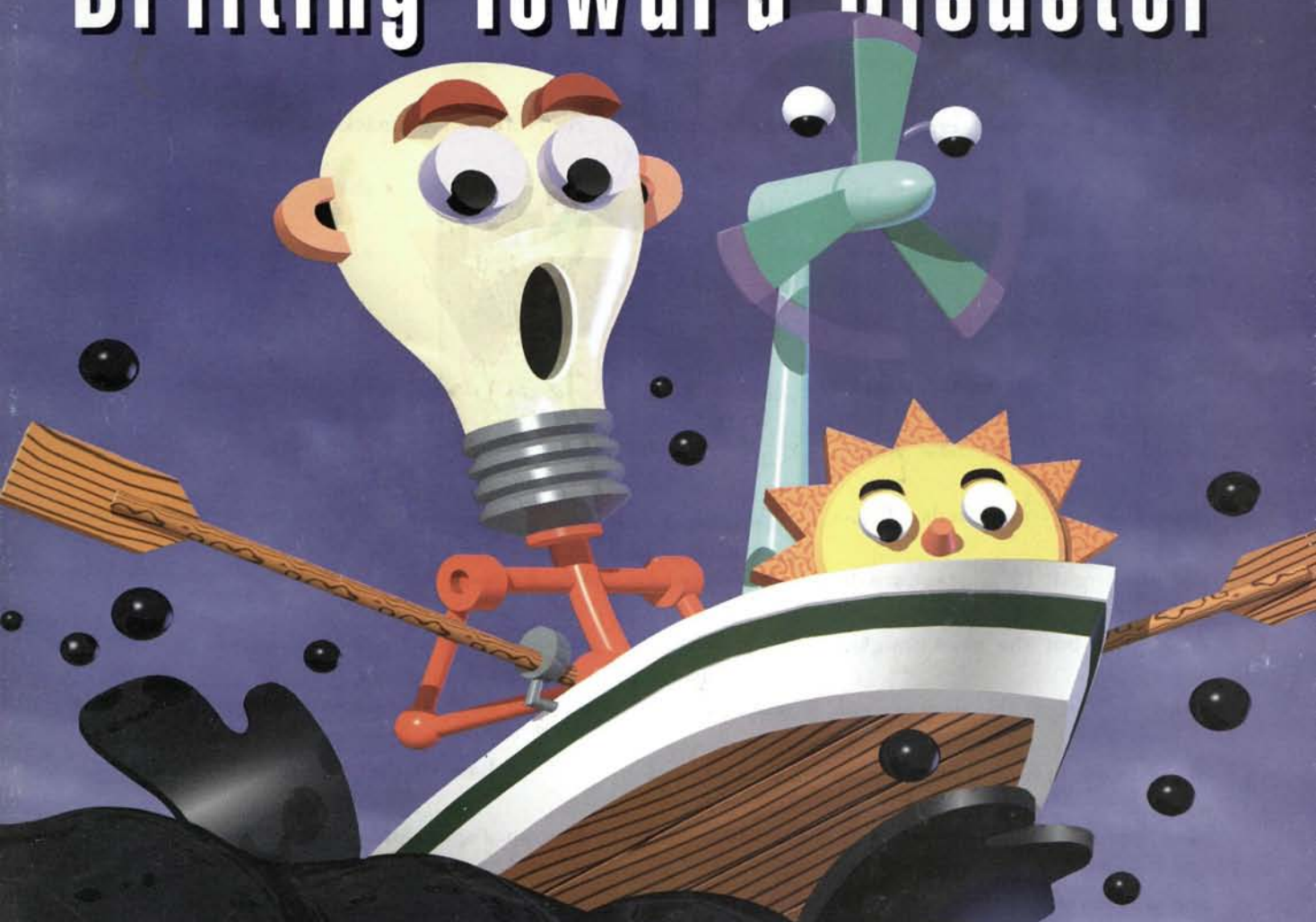


JAMES FALLAWS: INTERNET INDEXING SYSTEMS OF THE FUTURE

The Atlantic Monthly

APRIL 1996

Drifting Toward Disaster



How the congressional attack
on energy research is threatening
the environment,
national security



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“
It's a really
big small car,
if you know
what I mean.
”

Okay, so you
can't afford the
most expensive
car on the road;
that's life. But
to think you

they're building all of this around a high-tensile-
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when it needs to, like a reinforced passenger
cage. To help protect you and yours. ¶ Of course,
we wouldn't say these things without some back-
up. So we rear-ended these new Saturns. And

have to spend thirty grand to feel safe,
well, that's not only crazy, it's downright scary.

¶ So, when we sat down to
design the new Saturns, we
decided right off the bat that
both our new wagon and sedan
would meet all the new side-
impact safety standards. Oh,
not the rigid 1996 standards,



Fender benders, you name it, insurance agent Mark Jacobs has seen it all. So he bought a Saturn.

mind you, but the even tougher 1997 standards;
today, now, right this very second. ¶ And speaking
of right now, in Spring Hill, Tennessee, at the Saturn
plant, team members are building these new sedans
and wagons with front and rear crumple zones and



installing dual airbags and height-
adjustable front seatbelts. And, oh yes,

And otherwise smacked, crashed and buffeted
them. On supercomputers
and in the crash lab; all with-
in the guidelines of some of
the strictest safety standards
the government mandates.
We even did some at speeds
higher than what the law

requires. Just to be safe, so to speak. ¶ Which may
explain why, after seeing countless real-life exam-
ples of how different cars perform safety-wise,
insurance agent and family man

Mark Jacobs bought a Saturn.

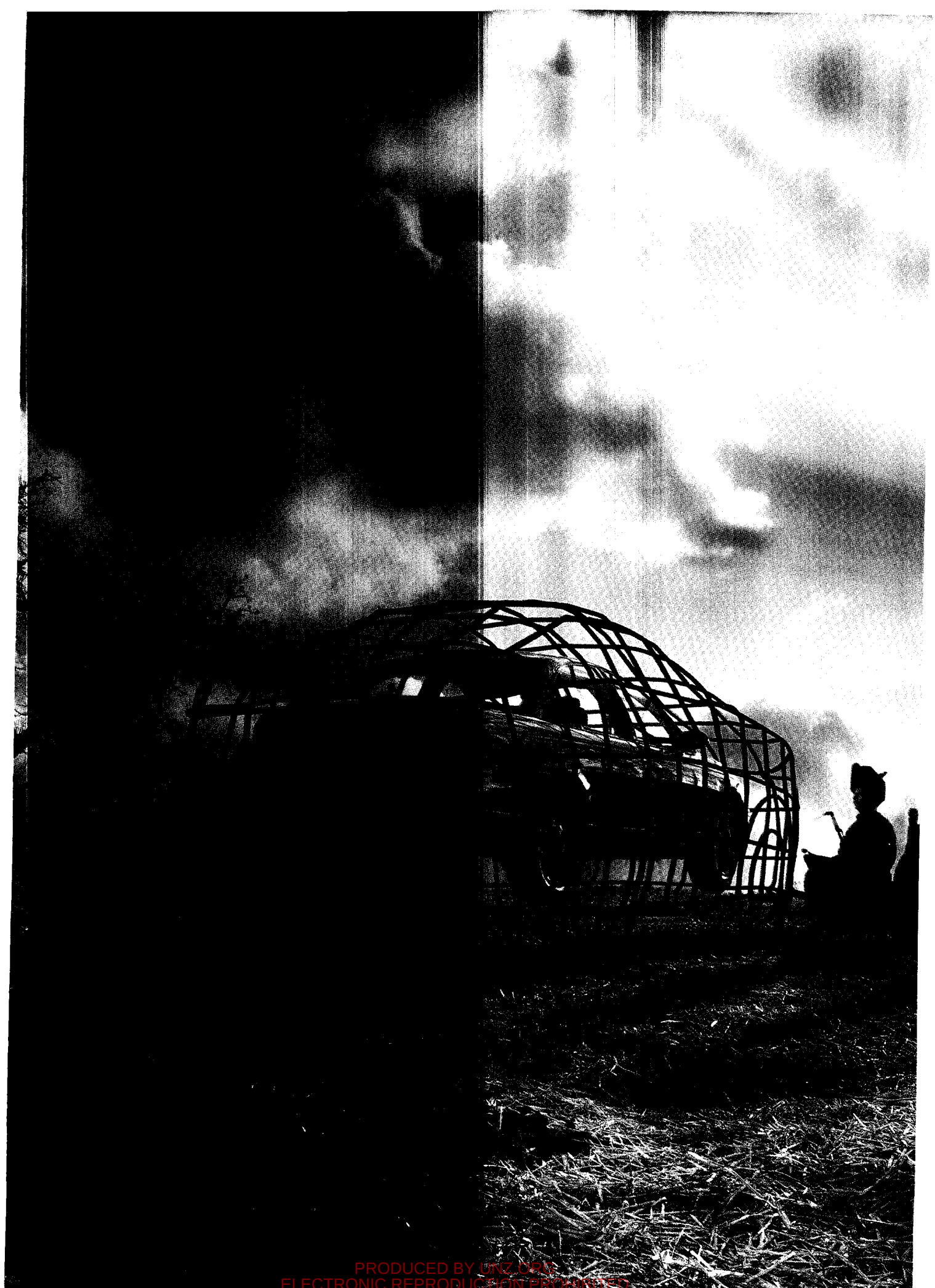
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us. If you know what we mean.



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Never confuse having a career with having a life.

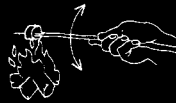


fig. 1.

Model the chocolate
around the chocolate
bar.



fig. 2.

Assemble chocolate bar
with chocolate pieces.



fig. 3.

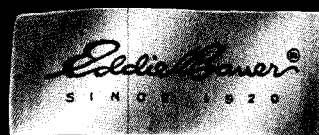
Quickly shape the bar
into rectangular shape
chocolate bar.



fig. 4.

Put chocolate bar into
mold. It is done.

If you asked Eddie Bauer the meaning of life, he probably would've been too busy fishing to answer. (Eddie conveniently claimed such trips gave him yet another chance to test the



clothing he designed and sells. Men and women who "have a life" know what if they only had a free moment, and call for a nearby store or catalog or our time-tested clothing. 800-789-3887.



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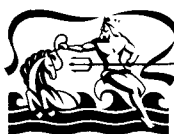
Research programs supported by the federal government have made important breakthroughs in renewable-energy and environmental technologies—technologies that could lessen our dependence on imported oil, reduce pollution, and give America the lead in a vital new industrial sector. Congress is on the verge of throwing all this away.

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The father: an Air Force general, one of the nation's top intelligence officers, a man of power whose belief in the world of hierarchy was total. The son: newly ordained, celebrating his first mass, mounting the pulpit to speak as a priest. The time: the height of the Vietnam War. A memoir.

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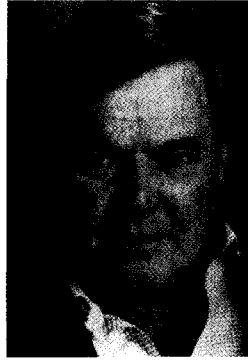


745 BOYLSTON STREET

R. W. APPLE JR., whose travel article about eastern Germany, "The Old Made New," appears in this issue, is one of the world's great bon vivants. He is also among this country's best-known political reporters. As Washington bureau chief of *The New York Times*, Apple keeps up a hectic pace: since January he has often visited several states a week as he covers his eighth presidential campaign.

On the weekends he does not necessarily retreat to his Georgetown home. When we reached him recently, he outlined his Friday plans: appearing on a panel on China policy at James Baker's new Institute for Public Policy, at Rice University, in Houston; attending the Houston Grand Opera's production of *Four Saints in Three Acts* that night; and dining at Cafe Annie, the city's most acclaimed restaurant, afterward. Saturday morning he would get on a plane for Iowa to cover the caucuses. "I guess I'm different from most," he said in a notable understatement, "in that my idea of relaxation after returning from a journalistic trip has always been to plan a pleasure trip."

Wherever he goes, Apple, whose guidebook *Apple's Europe* is cherished by travelers, seems to find the most interesting cultural and culinary sites. He gave us some tips.



- "In a new city never be too proud to take a half-day bus tour as an introduction; you will quickly discover what you want to see more of and what bores you."

- "Just as good cooking is at least fifty percent good shopping, so good travel requires good preparation—reading, studying maps, talking to friends and acquaintances who have been where you're going. It's astonishing how many people never do these obvious things."

- "Use the concierge—and if you want tickets to the opera or the theater or a concert or a game, call or fax the concierge from home. If he or she comes through, tip generously."

- "Off the beaten track I take with me a small pepper mill (to enliven bland grub) and my Sony shortwave radio. It's amazing how many places don't have CNN and don't sell the *International Herald-Tribune* or the *Financial Times*."

When we asked him what he thought was the most surprising thing about Eastern Europe since the fall of communism (which he covered for the *Times*), Apple replied, "How long it is taking them to learn how to cook again." Better pack that pepper mill. —THE EDITORS

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R.W. Apple Jr. ("The Old Made New") is the Washington bureau chief of *The New York Times*. His articles have appeared in *GQ*, *Town & Country*, *Saturday Review*, and *Travel Holiday*.

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James Carroll ("An American Requiem") is the author of many novels, including *The City Below* (1994). His article in this issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* is drawn from his book *An American Requiem*, to be published next month by Houghton Mifflin. A portion of this article appears in *Communion*, a collection of essays edited by David Rosenberg and published by Anchor/Doubleday.

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LETTERS

New Iron Curtain

Anatol Lieven's article "A New Iron Curtain" (January *Atlantic*) is a throw-back to the Cold War. As during the age of Stalinism, Lieven wants to disenfranchise (to shut them up) the peoples in the zone between Russia and Europe. Lieven blames the victims of imperialism, not the imperialists. For him, the relationship between Russia and the West is one of geo- and power politics. With friends like Anatol Lieven, Russia needs no enemies. It was Russian ideology and imperialism living beyond their means, not Western weapons, conspiracy, or money, that bankrupted the Soviet Union. Instead of underwriting the Russian "right" to keep Russia's neighbors economically backward—and thus, also, Russia poor—a true friend would teach Russians moderation. Lieven is absolutely wrong in saying that Russians do not threaten their neighbors. They threaten even the West. The problem is that the threats, implied or direct, keep Western capital out of Eastern Europe, especially Ukraine and the Baltics. Nothing is gained by pretending that Russia is not economically backward or that the Russian state (hiding behind the "right to security") over the centuries has not committed horrendous atrocities on the peoples of Eastern Europe. A truly objective analyst of post-Soviet Eastern Europe would draw a difference between imperial states and colonized peoples.

Andrew Ezergailis

Professor of Russian History
Ithaca College
Ithaca, N.Y.

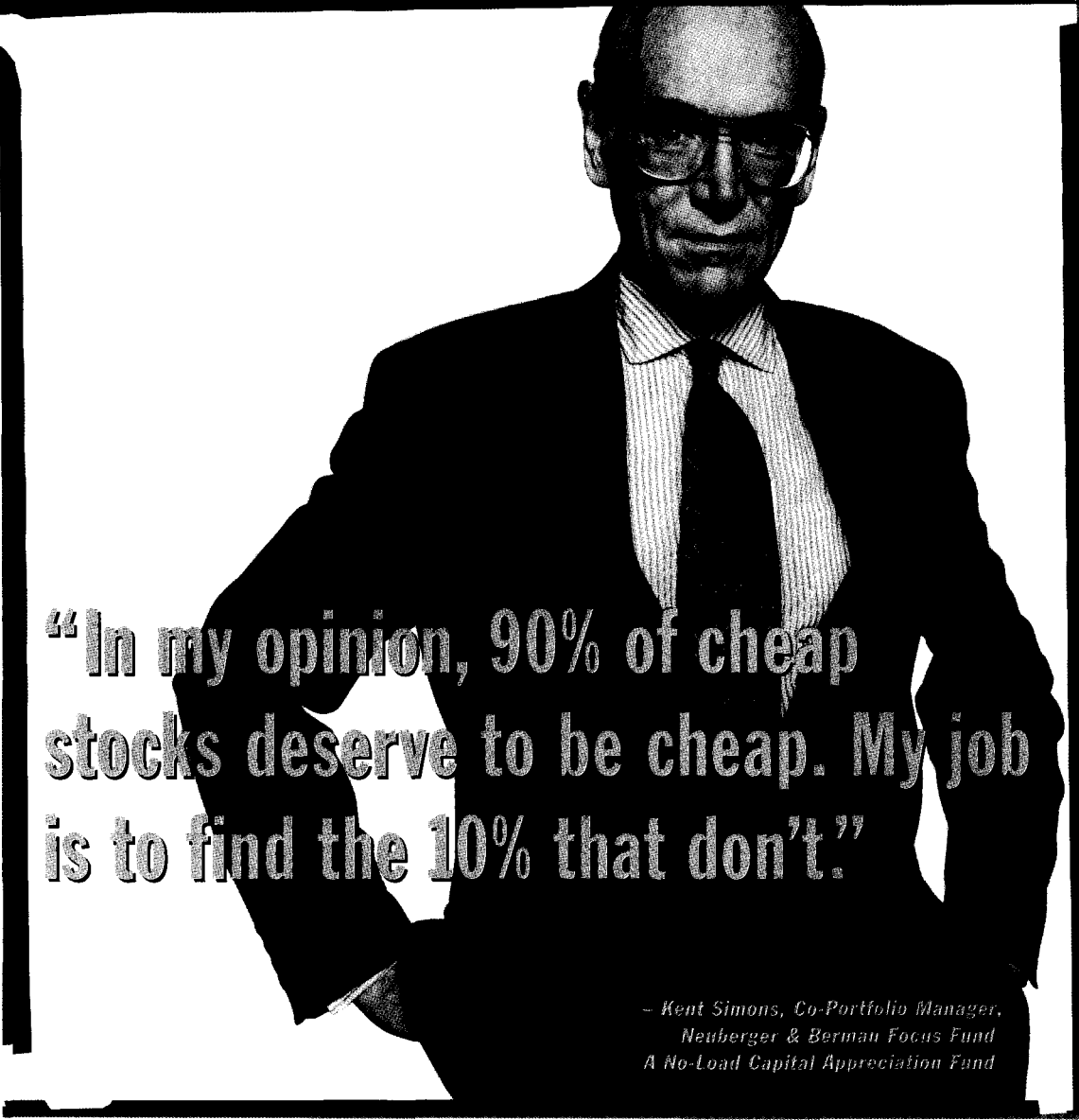
Anatol Lieven characterizes Westerners who support the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as political opportunists gunning for the Polish vote or as anti-Russian propagandists nostalgic for the Cold War. In so doing he squanders center court in *The Atlantic Monthly* on a bout with a straw man. Lieven demonstrates beyond any

doubt that all Russian politicians oppose NATO's eastward enlargement and will hint at catastrophic consequences to dissuade the alliance from going ahead with its plans. Why is this the least bit surprising or revealing? In today's wounded, disillusioned Russia, no political figure with an ounce of savvy would miss a chance to impugn the motives of an alliance that stood in opposition to the motherland for four decades. If NATO does undertake a limited expansion, however, Russian leaders will have no choice but to accept it. Soon thereafter they will (quietly, perhaps) come to value it. In an enlarged NATO, Germany will have no need to pursue an independent security strategy in central Europe, the smaller nations of the region will be far less inclined to pick fights among themselves, and stable democracies and small, defensive armed forces under civilian control will be the norm to Russia's west. Lieven claims that an honest, coherent discussion in the West of the necessity for expansion has not occurred. Perhaps he was just not aware of it.

Gary L. Geipel
Indianapolis, Ind.

Anatol Lieven replies:

Andrew Ezergailis writes that I am "underwriting the Russian 'right' to keep Russia's neighbors economically backward." This is a willful misrepresentation of my position. As I wrote in my article, I am strongly in favor of the earliest possible membership in the European Union for both the Balts and the Visegrad countries. As I also wrote, one reason I oppose NATO expansion at present is precisely that I believe that the Western European governments are using it to distract the Eastern Europeans from what would be for them a much bigger prize. This is, of course, because the Western Europeans are terrified, owing to the internal changes they would have to carry out (reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, for example) in order



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to extend the European Union to the east.

Concerning Professor Ezergailis's suggestion that a supposed Russian security threat to Eastern Europe is keeping Western investment from the region, there is no evidence either for a real threat or for the myth of its having any effect on Western businessmen. Relations between Russia and Estonia have sometimes been strained in recent years, but this has not prevented Western capital from helping to make Estonia one of the great economic success stories of Eastern Europe. If other countries have lagged behind, it has been for their own internal reasons.

As for Gary Geipel, the differences between us are probably in the end rather slight. Like him, I strongly support the integration of Eastern and Western Europe, and I do not oppose the idea of NATO expansion at some stage in the future; I just don't see the need for it right now, when Russians are at their most nervous and resentful. I honestly believe that if we proceed cautiously, we can have both integration and a reasonably co-operative Russia. What's the flaming hurry?

Washington's Character

Amazing! Never mind that today discussions about ethnic and racial matters are commonplace, and that historians, looking to America's past, emphasize those themes. You run a piece ("A Man on Horseback," by Richard Brookhiser, January *Atlantic*) on "the human qualities of George Washington, and what they say about 'character'"—a piece that utters not a word about the man's owning scores of slaves.

Not that the author didn't provide himself with opportunities. The Roman models for American republicans, after all, also owned slaves, and one wonders whether or not a man "tremendous in his wrath" ever visited that temper on his human chattel. Which of those 110 "Rules of Civility" did Washington observe when dealing with his slaves? If he avoided killing "vermin, or fleas, lice, ticks, etc. in the sight of others," did he also forbear mistreating the people who were his property, within or without the sight of others? And if manners "meant the graceful acknowledgment of others across social distances," how mannerly

was he across the social gap between master and slave?

John D. Milligan
Buffalo, N. Y.

Richard Brookhiser replies:

Anyone who writes about George Washington has to be mindful of his record of slave-owning. He certainly was. In the last twenty years of his life the topic was seldom far from his thoughts. He went so far as to propose selling Mount Vernon and hiring out its freed slaves as laborers. (The plan came to nothing, because there were no takers for a property with such bad soil.) He ended up freeing all his slaves in his will—something no other slave-owning President, including Jefferson, did. I discuss these and other aspects of Washington's slave-owning in my book *Founding Father*, from which the article was drawn.

A French Mirror

Hans Koning's article "A French Mirror" (December *Atlantic*) makes the case that the French are doing a good job of preparing for the future. Although I agree that the French have done well at preserving towns and cities and building an effective public-transportation system, most evidence I gathered from a year spent in France is that they are running themselves into a ditch.

Perhaps Koning has mistaken the lavish rhetoric of French public officials for vision. It is not. A 12 percent unemployment rate, a six percent federal deficit, shrinking disposable incomes, and sharpening ethnic strife suggest that France hasn't done a great job of looking ahead. The public school system is rigorous but negative and famously inflexible. Universities, while free, are training for jobs and a society that no longer exist. Retraining and continuing education are mostly nonexistent.

I must admit that it was refreshing—at least for a while—to live in a nation where the bottom line and the "private sector can do everything" mania are not running amok. But France's imperial executive bureaucracy, which continues to invest heavily in lost jobs to the detriment of new opportunities, is hardly more creative than our new revolutionaries who sing their age-old fantasies in dreary cho-

rus. The troubles of our era call for innovative methods that neither ideologues here nor bureaucratic royalty there seems capable of generating. Though opposite in their prescriptions, both finally have one answer to all evils: more of the same.

David Pezzullo
Baltimore, Md.

I, too, spent a number of months in France last year, but I came away with a very different view of *la vie française*. Hans Koning's romantic claptrap about a noble and benevolent welfare state must result from drinking too much *vin ordinaire* at Les Deux Magots. If a café or magazine or movie is any good, it ought not to need government help, *n'est-ce pas?* And although France's telephone system may be as good as ours, it costs four times as much to make a call—or to buy gas or to travel. The high costs debilitate everyone.

For all of France's wonderful buildings, glorious past, and *sens civique*, the nation is riven by social warfare and populated by a citizenry that struggles to put protein into its diet because of misguided agricultural programs, is beggared by an outdated retail pricing framework that makes it hard to buy decent clothing, and has its aspirations limited by an education system that still employs *dictée*—learning by rote—rather than problem-solving as its organizing principle. Gripped by a stubborn recession, venal scandals, bitter strikes, and intractable unemployment, daily life in most of the nation is very different from the *socialiste* utopia that Koning describes.

Jeffrey S. Young
Rescue, Calif.

Hans Koning managed to identify all the worst aspects of France in his article "A French Mirror." France is a wonderful place in spite of its oppressive civil-service elitism—not because of it.

The vibrant and growing use of personal computers in the United States is far superior both qualitatively and quantitatively to anything in France. Yet Koning is impressed by the second-rate Minitel hardware because the government gave millions of Minitels away. He seems dazzled by the huge number of nuclear reactors in France—although they are considered a blot on the landscape anywhere else—because they

were built by government instead of private utilities. In France an elite of politicians and civil servants, trained in a handful of elitist colleges in Paris and living in luxury apartments paid for by French taxpayers, take as many decisions as possible out of the hands of French citizens and into their own. Public-employee unions and college students—civil servants in training—extort money from the public through intimidating strikes and by rioting in the streets. It was oppressive under Louis XIV, it was oppressive under the Terror and both Napoleons, and it is still oppressive under Gaullists or socialists. I'll take the "icy wind of our sacred marketplace" over that anytime.

Richard E. Ralston
Marina del Rey, Calif.

"A French Mirror" is a paean to French government intervention in everything from technology to culture. Unfortunately, the article is factually incorrect and its logic is faulty. The French national railroad (SNCF) is not financially self-supporting, as Hans Koning claims. It is running an annual deficit of \$2.4 billion (*New York Times*, December 8, 1995). It is no more self-supporting than the government-planned *Concorde*, which has never earned a profit. France's budget deficits have ballooned in the 1990s, its currency has fluctuated widely, and interest rates are high, thus driving down economic growth. The Minitels that Koning admires are completely outclassed by the number of services, the number of subscribers, and the global reach of the Internet in this country. When was the last time the author used a French computer or even saw one? He says that France, unlike the United States, is planning for the twenty-first century. The premier industries in the twenty-first century, everyone agrees, will be computers, telecommunications, and biotechnology. The United States is the acknowledged world leader and pacesetter in each of these fields. The ten largest software companies in the world are in the United States. These industries have been driven primarily by entrepreneurship in a free-market economy. Silicon Valley is the envy of the world. President François Mitterrand in the early 1980s came to the San Francisco Bay Area to look at Silicon Valley and went home vowing to make it

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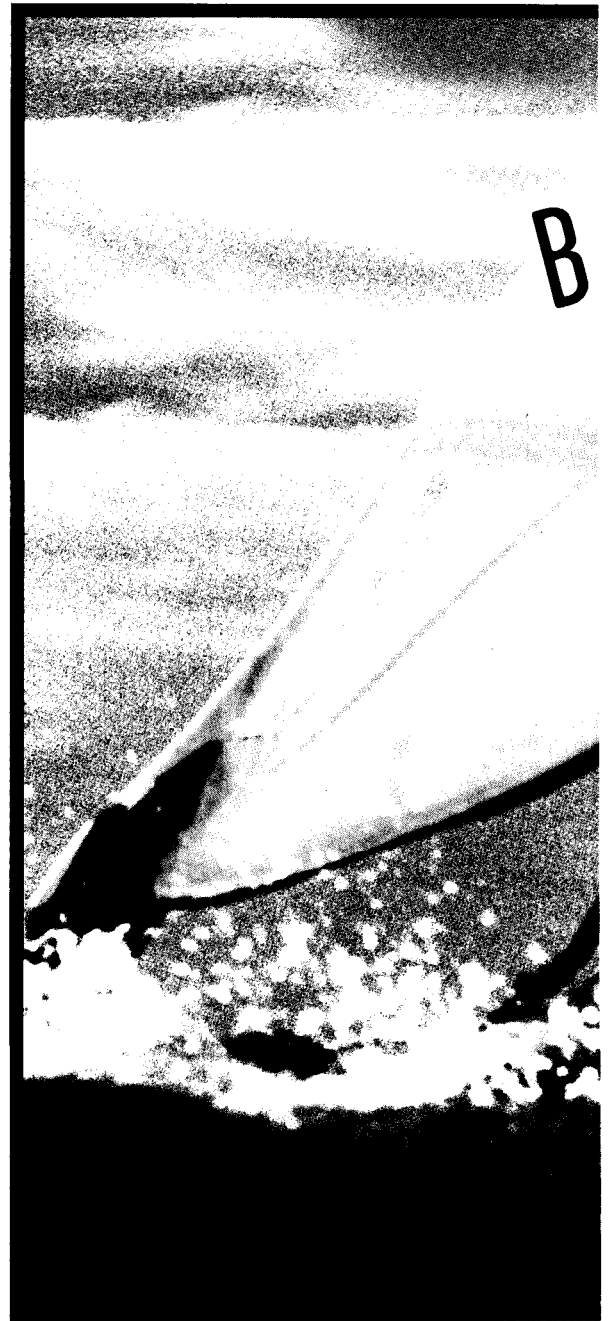
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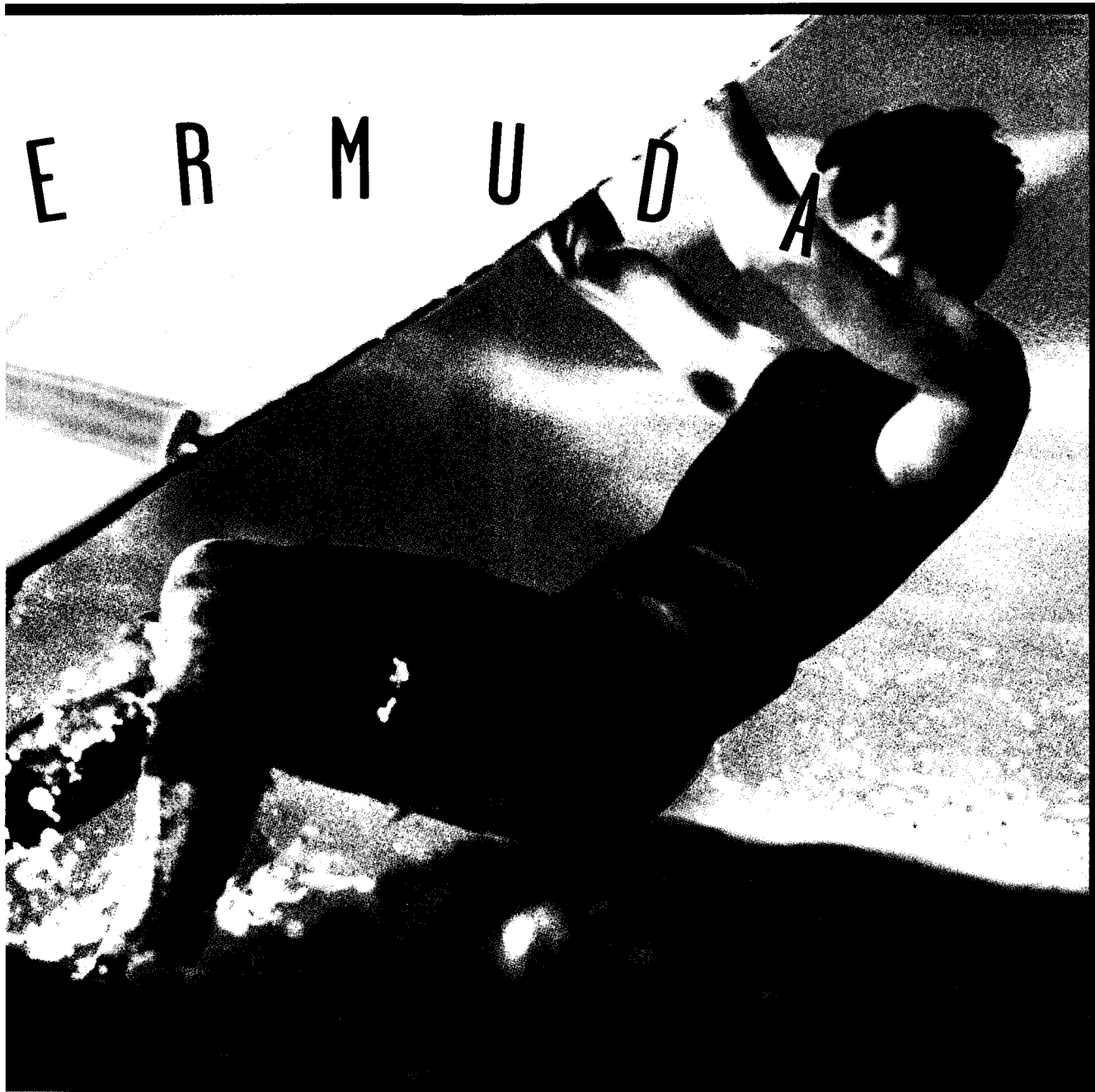


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easier to start companies in France. And this from a socialist President who had nationalized many French companies when he came to power. The French are now trying, desperately, to privatize major industries, such as autos and computers. When Renault (which is currently state-owned) tried to merge with Volvo, Volvo shareholders vociferously declined, and the deal fell through.

With the recent upheavals, if the French are not able to cut their deficits, they will not be able to join the common European currency, and will thus continue to cede monetary control to the Bundesbank and ensure their inevitable decline. Koning's recommendations for the United States will be no more successful in this country than they are in France.

Donald F. DuBois
Palo Alto, Calif.

Hans Koning's piece came out with less than perfect timing, just as a major clash over the future of the French state was erupting in the streets of Paris. The causes and results of December's strikes point up the weaknesses in his argument. Where Koning sees apolitical and farsighted civil servants keeping a firm grip on the tiller of the ship of state, millions of French citizens see a clubby and cliquish group of elitists dictating economic policy to them. On more than one occasion French friends have told me that it is America's *lack* of just such a class of "*énarques*" (graduates of the ultra-elite Ecole Nationale d'Administration) that makes our democracy more responsive to the wishes of its citizenry.

Not that the strikers should be glorified either: "intransigence" seemed to be the watchword among the national-railway employees in the most recent conflict. Instead of focusing on *sens civique*, Koning would have done well to elaborate on the force that sometimes directly opposes it, namely the hyperdeveloped French sense of *solidarité*. At its best a French strike can permit a specific group to manifest its unity in the face of a reticent or aggressive government, but the window-smashing, rock-throwing, and tire-burning of recent major strikes do not speak well of the *sens civique* of certain fishermen, farmers, truck drivers, and airline employees.

Mark Burde
St. Louis, Mo.

Hans Koning replies:

I wrote "A French Mirror" to hold up a mirror of alternatives to our present policies; nowhere did I suggest that France has created a utopia. What France has is an active civic sense. Disposable incomes in France are not shrinking but (in the opinion of the government) increasing too much. I do not know what it means to call the public school system "negative"; it is blissfully not bowing to the suggestions for more practicality—which usually amount to public relations and "communications" nonsense instead of serious studies. Les Deux Magots, unfortunately, does not serve *vin ordinaire*, only very expensive stuff. Jeffrey Young informs us that if a magazine or movie is any good, it has no need for public funds. *Sacra simplicitas*—or, if you prefer, you must be kidding! The bad is driving out the good at increasing speed, but public money may save the good.

When the French strikes peaked in December, I wondered what this would do to my article. Events may play tricks on writers for a monthly, but in this case they confirmed my report. The French strikes were to *protect* certain social achievements that a new government (which came into power after my article was written) tried to undo, contrary to its election-campaign promises. Rather than being "intimidating" or leading to "rioting in the streets," they were supported by an unusually large majority of the population, 60–70 percent, right through those weeks of hardship.

In talking about elitist civil servants, Mark Burde ignores the unprecedentedly sharp turn to the right that Jacques Chirac's government tried (it is now having apologetic second thoughts). I was lucky enough to predict strife, but there was no rock-throwing or tire-burning. Those are the weapons of Western Europe's farmers and fishermen, who have no strike option.

Here is the crux of the matter, missed by these correspondents. Of course there is a social war in France. There is a social war in every country. The idea that the great industrialists and bankers have the selfsame interests as the average citizen is hype that no democratic country but the United States takes seriously. The *sens civique* is precisely what made such a large majority support the striking railroad workers, postal workers,

and Metro drivers. After the strikes a trade-union leader said, "We do not want to live like Anglo-Saxons"—that is, in an "individualism without borders." I think the polls begin to show that neither Anglo-Saxons nor Americans generally want "to live like Anglo-Saxons."

Donald DuBois may have been too angry to read carefully. I wrote not that the national railroad was self-supporting but that the TGV, the high-speed train, is "more than self-supporting." So it is. It helps to reduce the deficit of the SNCF. Of course the Minitels, a low-cost and now fifteen-year-old service, are no match for the Internet, although they do provide a number of services still not available in the United States—for example, safe shopping (credit-card verification takes place in the terminal and does not go online). France Telecom says that the Minitel still satisfies most people most of the time (two billion calls in 1995, with more than a billion dollars' worth of business), but that the company is now in the process of becoming a provider of Internet services, not competing with Minitel but "as a complementary service." The Internet will be available nationwide for the price of a local call, because it will use the points of access already established to the Transpac network for the Minitel.

Strawberry Fields

"The Strawberry Fields" (November *Atlantic*) contains a glaring error: Eric Schlosser's gratuitous statements that Governor Pete Wilson has "relaxed enforcement of the state's tough labor laws," and that "growers avoided prosecution for workplace violations by hiding behind the legal fiction that labor contractors and sharecroppers were the actual employers of migrants." Schlosser thus attempts to attribute illegal sharecropping arrangements to inaction on the part of the Department of Industrial Relations, the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement, and this administration.

Curiously, earlier in the piece Schlosser and his sources cite with approval the legal action recently undertaken by this office involving one such sharecropping arrangement by Kirk Produce Company, and also the seminal 1989 California Supreme Court case involving similar is-

sues, *S. G. Borello & Sons v. Department of Industrial Relations*. In both cases the division took the position that the evidence presented made the grower the true employer of record, and the sharecropper merely an agent or employee.

One cannot have it both ways. If, as Schlosser concludes, we have "relaxed enforcement" of the state's labor laws, how can he explain that each of these cases was originally investigated and brought to court by this division? The Kirk Produce case was brought by the division under the aegis of the Targeted Industries Partnership Program (TIPP), through which the division participates in the vigorous enforcement of state and federal labor laws in the garment-manufacturing and agricultural industries. Last August this agency led a team of state, federal, and local authorities to free seventy-two Thai workers from a garment-manufacturing "slaveshop" in El Monte, California.

TIPP was one of Governor Wilson's program initiatives to improve enforcement and avoid duplication of effort by state and federal agencies charged with enforcing labor standards in the workplace. Through a combination of vigorous enforcement and preventive outreach educational efforts the program has achieved a remarkable degree of compliance in the agricultural industry.

Jose Millan

*Interim State Labor Commissioner
Division of Labor Standards Enforcement
San Francisco, Calif.*

Eric Schlosser replies:

Jose Millan's claim that TIPP "has achieved a remarkable degree of compliance" is itself remarkable. TIPP has man-

aged to stem some violations that are easily observed by inspectors in the field, such as the absence of drinking water and of portable toilets. But it has been much less successful at uncovering systematic wage theft. During the first two years of its existence, in a state with nearly one million farm workers, TIPP issued just twenty-nine citations for violations of the minimum-wage law.

The Borello case was set in motion by a state labor examiner who drove past a pickle field, noticed blatant violations of the labor code, and felt so enraged that



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he issued a citation on the spot, ignoring the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement's policy not to target sharecropping. The division pursued the Borello case halfheartedly, calling no witnesses at the initial hearing and not even bothering to contest an appeals-court decision in favor of the grower. The California Supreme Court chose entirely on its own initiative to review the case, a judicial prerogative that is rarely exercised.

Governor Wilson's administration does, however, deserve some credit for its efforts to halt illegal sharecropping in the strawberry industry. The current U.S.

Department of Labor has done little to enforce the Fair Labor Standards Act in California agriculture. The federal government has the power, under FLSA, to seize agricultural goods harvested by workers paid less than minimum wage—a power that, if exercised, would do a great deal of good.

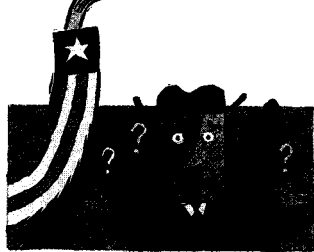
Advice & Consent

Thanks for Paul Gagnon's thoughtful critique of current American education, "What Should Children Learn?" (December *Atlantic*). One need only become familiar with Victorian history to recognize the defining effect the Industrial Revolution had upon its and our times. History witnessed the celerity with which the machine, in all its diverse manifestations, shrank the world and consolidated power into the hands of those few who understood its meaning. The ensuing luxuries, on one hand, and dislocations, on the other, set a sociopolitical order that lingers today. While the unwise may dismiss

the need for deep inquiry into this period and its aftermath—in favor, perhaps, of the customs and enterprises of the Tlingit Indians (this is actually one of the study subjects of my fifth grader)—they will find themselves unprepared for the vicissitudes that are upon us as the Information Revolution unfolds. Barbara Tuchman's *The Proud Tower* can serve as an allegory for the current situation, wherein the informational haves not only eclipse the political power but also determine the destiny of the have-nots.

John G. Dzwonczyk
Avon Lake, Ohio

THE APRIL ALMANAC



Government

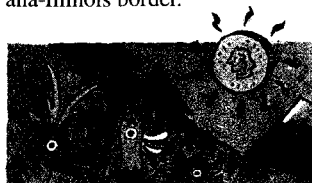
Money laundering—the use of financial transactions to hide illegal profits, such as drug money—could become more difficult this month; new regulations governing record-keeping by financial institutions may take effect as early as April 1. Written by the Treasury Department and the Federal Reserve Board, the rules require institutions to collect and keep for five years information about electronic transfers of \$3,000 or more—thus applying a scrutiny similar to that already given to cash transactions. Each business day more than \$2 trillion worldwide is moved electronically. 15, the deadline for filing tax returns. This year taxpayers may make use of two innovations. Single taxpayers who meet income and other qualifications may file wholly by telephone; and all taxpayers (except, for security reasons, those now filing by phone) may opt to have refunds paid by direct deposit (previously only those filing by personal computer could do so).

Q&A

Why do the time zones in the United States zigzag, instead of following the meridians in straight lines?

Time zones were introduced in the United States in 1883 at the instigation of railway owners, who were frustrated by the scheduling problems created because stations across the country observed some 100 different local times, determined by the location of the sun overhead. "Railroad Time" divid-

ed the country into zones based on meridians 15 degrees apart and then adjusted to accommodate such factors as the locations of train stations and of the ends of railway lines. In 1918 the government redrew the boundaries to avoid dividing densely populated areas and to keep proximate commercial centers in the same zone; it paid more heed to the requests of cities and states than to the convenience of railroads. There have been dozens of boundary changes since. In most cases the lines have been moved westward, reflecting the East's traditional predominance in commerce and communities' consequent desire to be part of or closer to the Eastern time zone. For example, the line separating the Eastern and Central time zones originally ran through Ohio, but was shifted westward many times until it reached its present position, on and near the Indiana-Illinois border.



Environment

This month brings some reason for hope concerning Eastern Europe's beleaguered environment: Switzerland forgives 20 percent of Bulgaria's Swiss-franc debt in return for Bulgaria's commitment to invest an equal sum—about \$18 million—in domestic environmental projects. Debt-for-environmental-action swaps originated in 1987, when a nonprofit organization, Conservation International, bought \$650,000 of Bolivia's foreign debt in exchange for Bolivia's promise to establish a national park. Since then at least 16 debtor countries—in the Caribbean, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America—have made similar deals with official and nongovernmental organizations in the United States.



The Skies

April 2, Venus lies on the edge of the Pleiades, a compact star cluster, high in the western skies after sunset. 3, Full Moon, also known this month as the Sprouting Grass and Little Frogs Croak Moon. Also tonight a lunar eclipse will reach totality at 6:26 P.M. EST—during moonrise in the eastern United States. By the time the Moon rises in the Rocky Mountain states and westward, the eclipse will be mostly over. 7, at 2:00 A.M. Daylight Saving Time begins; turn clocks ahead one hour.

Arts & Letters

Poetry gets a boost in schools, libraries, and bookstores across the country this month with the celebration of the first annual National Poetry Month. Initiated by the Academy of American Poets, the commemoration will include readings, workshops, and book displays. Also this month Sotheby's auctions some 1,200 lots of art, furniture, jewelry, books, and memorabilia from the estate of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. Items featured on the block April 23-26 will include a 1960 drawing by Robert Rauschenberg with images of John and Jacqueline Kennedy; a ring whose stone was cut from the 601-carat Lesotho diamond (a gift from Aristotle Onassis); and the Louis XVI desk on which President Kennedy signed the nuclear-test-ban treaty. The proceeds are expected to exceed \$5 million; they will go toward Onassis's estate taxes.



Health & Safety

April 29, working conditions into the next century could be affected by a report released today, as the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health announces its research agenda for the coming decade. Although NIOSH—an arm of the Department of Health and Human Services—is a nonregulatory body, its findings often influence rulings of the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The institute also makes science-based recommendations to employers. Its concerns in the coming years are likely to include occupational asthma, the quality of indoor environments, and violence and assaults in the workplace. Among the reports NIOSH has released in recent years are one, in 1994, challenging claims that back-support belts help prevent injury and one, in 1991, disputing the notion that frequent exposure to computer screens increases the risk of miscarriage.



50 Years Ago

Bergen Evans, writing in the April, 1946, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: "Irrationality must come close to being the largest single vested interest in the world. It has a dozen service stations in every town. There are twenty-five thousand practicing astrologers in America who disseminate their lore through a hundred daily columns, fifteen monthly and two annual publications. . . . It is even said that there is a movement on foot to have a Federal astrologer appointed as an officer of the government, and considering the official recognition given to other forms of clairvoyance, the movement may succeed."



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Kicking in Groups

*Just as intriguing as Robert Putnam's theory that we are "bowling alone"—
that the bonds of civic association are dissolving—
is how readily the theory has
been accepted*

IN 1958 Edward Banfield published *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, a study of underdevelopment in a village at the southern tip of Italy—"the extreme poverty and backwardness of which," he wrote, "is to be explained largely (but not entirely) by the inability of the villagers to act together for their common good." Banfield called the prevailing ethos of the village "amoral familism": "Maximize the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family; assume that all others will do likewise." The best way to improve the village's economic condition, he said, would be for "the southern peasant to acquire the ways of the north."

Ten years later, in *The Unheavenly City*, Banfield applied a similar line of argument to American inner-city black ghettos, without benefit of the kind of firsthand research he had done in Italy. This time he identified "present-mindedness" as the quality that caused the communities' problems. Whereas *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* had been respectfully received, *The Unheavenly City* was so controversial that for years Banfield required police protection when he spoke in public. The lesson seems to be that studying the difference between northern and southern Italy is a safe way of addressing a question still very much on Americans' minds: Why is there such a wide variation in the social and economic health of our neighborhoods and ethnic groups and, for that matter, of different societies all over the world?

Robert Putnam, a professor of government at Harvard, has to decide whether to confront just this issue. In 1993 Putnam published a book called *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Though its main text is only 185 pages long, *Making Democracy Work* is the fruit of immense labor. In 1970 Italy created local governments in its twenty regions and turned over many

of the functions of the central government to them. Putnam and a team of colleagues almost immediately embarked on a study of the new governments' performance, covering the entire nation and focusing particularly on a few localities, including a town quite near the one where Banfield researched his book.

The finding that leaped out at Putnam was that the governments in the prosperous north of Italy outperformed the ones in the benighted south. Through a variety of statistical exercises he tried to demonstrate that their success was not simply a case of the rich getting richer. For example, he showed that regional government officials are less well educated in the north than in the south, and that in the northern provinces economic-development levels are not especially predictive of government performance. He found the north's secret to be a quality that Machiavelli called *virtu civile* ("civic virtue")—an ingrained tendency to form small-scale associations that create a fertile ground for political and economic development, even if (especially if, Putnam would probably say) the associations are not themselves political or economic. "Good government in Italy

is a by-product of singing groups and soccer clubs," he wrote. Civic virtue both expresses and builds trust and cooperation in the citizenry, and it is these qualities—which Putnam called "social capital," borrowing a phrase from Jane Jacobs—that make everything else go well.

Putnam was arguing against the conventional wisdom in the social sciences, which holds that civic virtue is an appurtenance of a traditional society—"an atavism destined to disappear" with modernization, which replaces small organizations that operate by custom with big ones that operate by rules. Instead, he said, even the biggest and most modern societies can't function well if the local civic dimension is weak. He hinted here and there

by Nicholas Lemann



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“Bowling Alone” struck a nerve. It provided a coherent theory explaining why the quality of society seems to have deteriorated

that it was actually the large bureaucratic overlay that was going to wind up being obsolete.

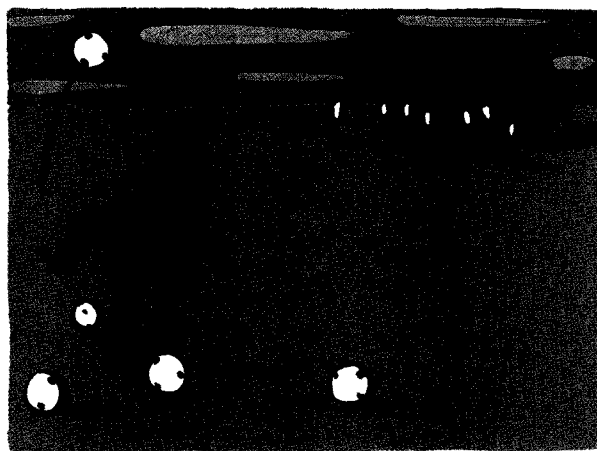
What causes some societies to become more civic-minded than others? In Italy, Putnam said, the north-south difference dates from the 1100s, when the Normans established a centralized, autocratic regime in the south, and a series of autonomous republics arose in the north. The southern system stressed what Putnam called “vertical bonds”: it was rigidly hierarchical, with those at the bottom dependent on the patronage of landowners and officials rather than on one another. In the north small organizations such as guilds and credit associations generated “horizontal bonds,” fostering a sense of mutual trust that doesn’t exist in the south. Putnam continually stressed the “astonishing constancy” of the north-south difference: it survived the demise of the independent northern republics in the seventeenth century and the Risorgimento in the nineteenth. “The southern territories once ruled by the Norman kings,” he wrote, “constitute exactly the seven least civic regions in the 1970s.” We shouldn’t expect the situation to change anytime soon, because “where institution building . . . is concerned, time is measured in decades.”

Social science has become a statistical art, overwhelmingly concerned with using correlation coefficients to express the effect of one thing on another—or, to use the jargon, to discover and isolate the independent variable that has the greatest influence on the dependent variable. Civic virtue can be understood as Putnam’s contribu-

tion to an ongoing quest for the magic independent variable that will explain economic development; he belongs to an intellectual tradition that tries to locate it in intrinsic cultural tendencies. In this sense civic virtue is a descendant of Max Weber’s Protestant ethic, and is the opposite of Oscar Lewis’s culture of poverty and Banfield’s amoral familism. The venerability of the tradition and its powerful commonsense appeal shouldn’t obscure the fact that all such independent variables are, necessarily, artificial constructs. Civic virtue is measured (to three decimal places!) by cobbling together such indices as newspaper-readership figures, voter turnout, and the abundance of sports clubs, and is not, as Putnam admitted, all-powerful as a predictor. Even in parts of northern Italy “the actual administrative performance of most of the new governments”—the subject under study, after all—“has been problematical.”

■ ■ ■

Nonetheless, when Putnam tentatively brought his theory home to the United States, it created a sensation—of exactly the opposite kind from the one Banfield created a quarter century ago with *The Unheavenly City*. An article called “Bowling Alone,” which Putnam published in the January, 1995, issue of the *Journal of Democracy*, had an impact far, far beyond the usual for academic writing. In the wake of “Bowling Alone,” Putnam



has been invited to Camp David to consult with President Bill Clinton. His terminology has heavily influenced the past two State of the Union addresses; *Making Democracy Work*, initially ignored by the general-interest press, was reviewed on the front page of *The New*

York Times Book Review; Putnam was prominently mentioned in the musings of Senator Bill Bradley about his disillusionment with politics; and, unlikeliest of all, he was the subject of a profile in *People* magazine.

The thesis of “Bowling Alone” is that “the vibrancy of American civil society”—the magic variable—“has notably declined over the past several decades.” Putnam gets his title from the finding that from 1980 to 1993 league bowling declined by 40 percent while the number of individual bowlers rose by 10 percent. The rest of his evidence is less whimsical: voter turnout, church attendance, and union membership are down. The percentage of people who trust the government and who attend community meetings has dropped. The leading indicator for Putnam—membership in voluntary associations—is down. Look at the Boy Scouts, the Lions, the Elks, the Shriners, the Jaycees, the Masons, the Red Cross, the Federation of Women’s Clubs, and the League of Women Voters: “Serious volunteering declined by roughly one-sixth” from 1974 to 1989. The logic of *Making Democracy Work* would suggest that the true import of these changes is not that they are inherently unfortunate so much as that they predict a broader decline in our society’s economic vitality—since, according to Putnam, that vitality rests on a cultural bedrock of local associational strength.

Putnam is scrupulously careful in “Bowling Alone” not to push his theory too hard. Earlier this year, though, he stated the thesis more firmly, in an article in *The American Prospect* called “The Strange Disappearance of Civic America,” and offered an explanation for it: Americans who were born after the Second World War are far less civic-minded than their elders, and the main reason is that they grew up after the introduction of television, which “privatizes our leisure time.” Putnam is now working up a book on the subject.

■ ■ ■

“Bowling Alone” struck a nerve in part because it provided a coherent theory to explain the dominant emotion in

American politics: a feeling that the quality of our society at the everyday level has deteriorated severely. An economic statistic like the "misery index" doesn't match the political mood; Putnam's theory does. It is especially appealing to liberal politicians, who see in it the possibility of a rhetoric they can use to address an issue that has been owned by conservatives. Also, if Putnam is right that as local associations go, so goes the nation, his work suggests the possibility of solving our problems through relatively low-cost association-strengthening local initiatives that don't require higher taxes. This makes a wonderful message for Democrats, who want to offer a positive program that is not vulnerable to anti-tax rhetoric. Foundation executives, who want to believe that the limited grants they make can reap large social benefits, also tend to be Putnam fans. Even people whose interests aren't directly affected have eagerly subscribed to the theory of "Bowling Alone," partly because of its apparent validity and partly for reasons I'll discuss later.

It must be said, however, that the talk about "Bowling Alone," and to a lesser extent the article itself, directly contradict the logic of *Making Democracy Work*. In Putnam's Italian model the kind of overnight deterioration of civic virtue that he proposes regarding America would be inconceivable—once civic virtue is in place it is incredibly durable over the centuries. Putnam heartily endorses a theory from economic history called "path dependence," which he has summarized this way: "Where you can get to depends on where you're coming from, and some destinations you simply cannot get to from here." In "Bowling Alone" he quotes Tocqueville's view that "nothing . . . deserves more attention" than Americans' amazing associational predilections; by the standards of *Making Democracy Work*, these ought to have held us in good stead well into the next century. Putnam plainly believes that we were in pretty good associational shape as recently as 1960. How can a tendency toward civic engagement vanish in a single generation?

Not only was Putnam in *Making Democracy Work* insistent upon the lasting good effects of civic virtue, but he was elaborately pessimistic about the possibility of establishing civic virtue where it doesn't already exist. He predicted disaster in the former Communist dictatorships of Europe, because of their weakness in the local-associational area: "Palermo may represent the future of Moscow." Putnam drew this lesson from a comprehensive survey of Third World development efforts:

Unhappily from the point of view of social engineering . . . local organizations 'implanted' from the outside have a high failure rate. The most successful local organizations represent indigenous, participatory initiatives in relatively cohesive local communities.

■ ■ ■

If Putnam was right the first time, and civic virtue is deeply rooted, then it's worth wondering whether the United States might actually still have as much of it as ever, or nearly. If that is the case, the dire statistics in "Bowling Alone" reflect merely a mutation rather than a disappearance of civic virtue, because civic virtue has found new expressions in response to economic and social changes. From bowling leagues on up, many of the declining associations Putnam mentions are like episodes of *The Moonlighters* seen today—out of date.



I spent a couple of days phoning around in search of examples of new associations that have sprung up to take their place. Putnam mentions several of these in "Bowling Alone" in order to dismiss them as real replacements for the lost bowling leagues, either because

The most dramatic example I could find of new associations springing up to replace declining older ones is U.S. Youth Soccer

they don't involve regular face-to-face contact (the many associations in cyberspace; the 33-million-member American Association of Retired Persons) or because they don't encourage people to build lasting ties based on mutual strength (Alcoholics Anonymous and other support groups). The most dramatic example I could find—and a nicely apposite one, too—is U.S. Youth Soccer, which has 2.4 million members, up from 1.2 million ten years ago and from 127,000 twenty years ago. As a long-standing coach in this organization, I can attest that it involves incessant meetings, phone calls, and activities of a kind that create links between people which ramify, in the manner described by Putnam, into other areas.

Another intriguing statistic is the number of restaurants in the United States, which has risen dramatically, from 203,000 in 1972 to 368,000 in 1993. True, this probably means that fewer people are eating a family dinner at home. But from Putnam's perspective, that might be good news, because it means that people who are eating out are expanding their civic associations rather than pursuing amoral familism. (If you've ever visited northern Italy, the connection between restaurants and *virtu civile* seems obvious.) The growth in restaurants is not confined to fast-food restaurants, by the way, although it is true that the number of bars and taverns—institutions singled out for praise in "Bowling Alone"—has declined over the past two decades.

The number of small businesses—what the Internal Revenue Service calls

“non-farm proprietorships”—has about doubled since 1970. These can be seen as both generators and results of civic virtue, since they involve so much personal contact and mutual trust. A small subset, Community Development Corporations (organizations that are often explicitly Putnamlike schemes to promote association locally in the hope of a later economic payoff), have grown in number from 500 to 2,200 over the past twenty years. Individual contributions to charity, which are still made by more than three quarters of Americans, grew from \$16.2 billion in 1970 to \$101.8 billion in 1990. Although church attendance is, as Putnam says, down, the Pentecostal denominations are booming: their domestic membership has burgeoned over the past quarter century. Little League membership has increased every year. Membership in the PTA has risen over the past decade or so, though it's still far below its peak, which occurred in 1962–1963. Homeownership is high and steady, and, as Putnam admits in “Bowling Alone,” Americans move less frequently now than they did in the 1950s and 1960s.

■ ■ ■

Weighed against all this, the statistics in “Bowling Alone” are still impressive, and no doubt Putnam will nail down his case in his book. Let's say, however, for the sake of argument, that Putnam's thesis that civic virtue is rapidly collapsing in America isn't true. What would account for its being so widely and instantly accepted as gospel?

Bowling leagues, Elks and Lions, and the League of Women Voters are indisputably not what they used to be. Large internal population shifts have taken place since the 1960s: to the Sunbelt and, within metropolitan areas, to the suburbs. Birth rates dropped substantially and then rose again. Most mothers now work. All these changes could have resulted in atrophied forms of association that are culturally connected to older cities and to old-fashioned gender roles (bowling leagues are a good example), while other forms more oriented to open space and to weekends (like youth soccer) have grown.

I have lived in five American cities: New Orleans, Cambridge, Washington, Austin, and Pelham, New York. The two that stand out in my memory as

most deficient in the Putnam virtues—the places where people I know tend not to have elaborate hobbies and not to devote their evenings and weekends to neighborhood meetings and activities—are Cambridge and Washington. The reason is that these places are the big time. Work absorbs all the energy. It is what people talk about at social events. Community is defined functionally, not spatially: it's a professional peer group rather than a neighborhood. Hired hands, from nannies to headmasters to therapists, bear more of the civic-virtue load than is typical.

To people living this kind of life, many of whom grew up in a bourgeois provincial environment and migrated to one of the capitals, the “Bowling Alone” theory makes sense, because it seems to describe their own situation so well. It is natural for people to assume that if their own life trajectories have been in the direction of reduced civic virtue, this is the result not of choices they have made but of a vast national trend. I wonder if the pre-presidential Bill Clinton—the man who spent the morning after Election Day in 1992 wandering around Little Rock engaging in front-porch visits with lifelong friends—would have found “Bowling Alone” so strongly resonant.

A second reason for the appeal of “Bowling Alone” is that it avoids the Banfield problem. A true application of the line of thinking in *Making Democracy Work* would require searching the United States for internal differences in civic virtue and then trying to explain those differences. One inevitable result would be the shining of a harsh spotlight on the ghettos, with their high rates of crime, welfare dependency, and family breakup. In an article that appeared in *The American Prospect* in 1993 Putnam made a point of saying, “It would be a dreadful mistake, of course, to overlook the repositories of social capital within America's minority communities.” This doesn't mean that the spotlight wouldn't still fall on the ghettos, because Putnam was clearly referring to minority communities most of whose members are not poor. But with this caveat he demonstrates at least that he is aware of the sensitive areas into which his Italian inquiry could lead in the United States. So far he has res-

olutely kept his examples of the decline of civic virtue in America in the realm of middle- or even upper-middle-class culture.

In the 1993 *American Prospect* article Putnam wrote,

Classic liberal social policy is designed to enhance the opportunities of *individuals*, but if social capital is important, this emphasis is partially misplaced. Instead we must focus on community development, allowing space for religious organizations and choral societies and Little Leagues that may seem to have little to do with politics or economics.

With respect to the United States, the opposite of Putnam's theory would be this: There has been relatively little general decline in civic virtue. To the extent that the overall civic health of the nation did deteriorate, the dip was confined mainly to the decade 1965 to 1975—when, for example, crime and divorce rates rose rapidly—and things have been pretty stable since then. The overwhelming social and moral problem in American life is instead the disastrous condition of poor neighborhoods, almost all of which are in cities.

The model of a healthy country and needy ghettos would suggest a program much closer to the “liberal social policy” from which Putnam wants us to depart. Rather than assume, with Putnam, that such essential public goods as safety, decent housing, and good education can be generated only from within a community, we could assume that they might be provided from without—by government. If quite near the ghettos are working-class neighborhoods (and not insuperably distant are suburbs) of varying ethnic character and strong civic virtue, then the individual-opportunity model might be precisely the answer for ghetto residents—opportunity, that is, to move to a place that is part of the healthy American mainstream.

The difficulty with such a program is that it is politically inconvenient. It would involve, by contemporary standards, far too much action on the part of the government, with the benefits far too skewed toward blacks. The model of an entire United States severely distressed in a way that is beyond the power of government to correct is more comforting. ☞

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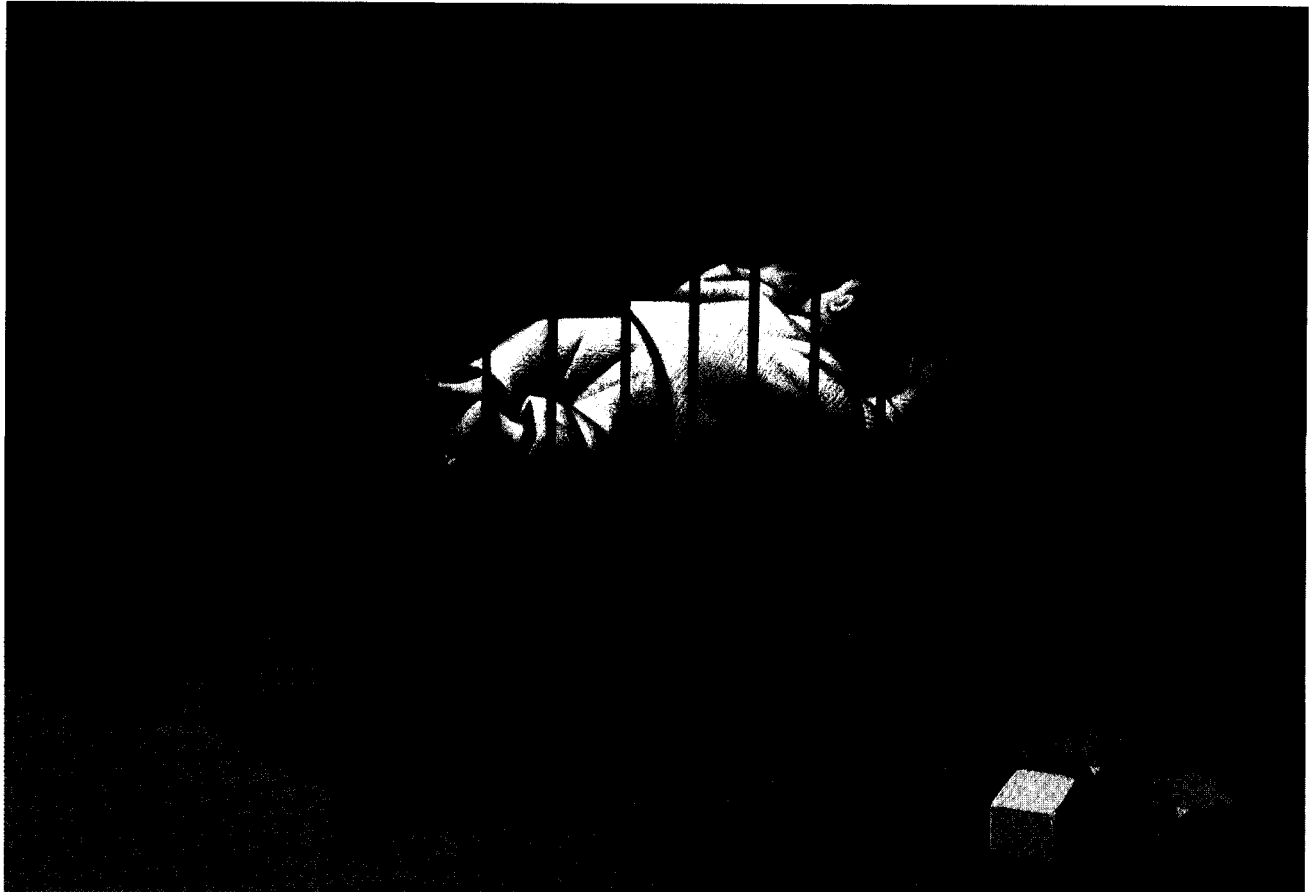
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In a Chinese Orphanage

The plight of many Chinese orphans is horrific and much publicized, but behind it lie public-policy concerns peculiar to China and rarely acknowledged parallels in the West

I HAD been warned, by friends and by the media, about the Chinese orphanage—the dying room for infants and the children being allowed to starve. But I was not prepared. I had expected the dying children to be crying, begging to be saved. Instead they were silent, withdrawn, immobile. They had no expectation of be-

by Anne F. Thurston

ing comforted or saved, or even any obvious awareness of the two women passing by. They were miniature versions of the “Muselmänner” of the Nazi concentration camps, the ones who stopped struggling, gave up living, waited only for death—the ones from whom other inmates recoiled, as though the Muselmänner’s resignation

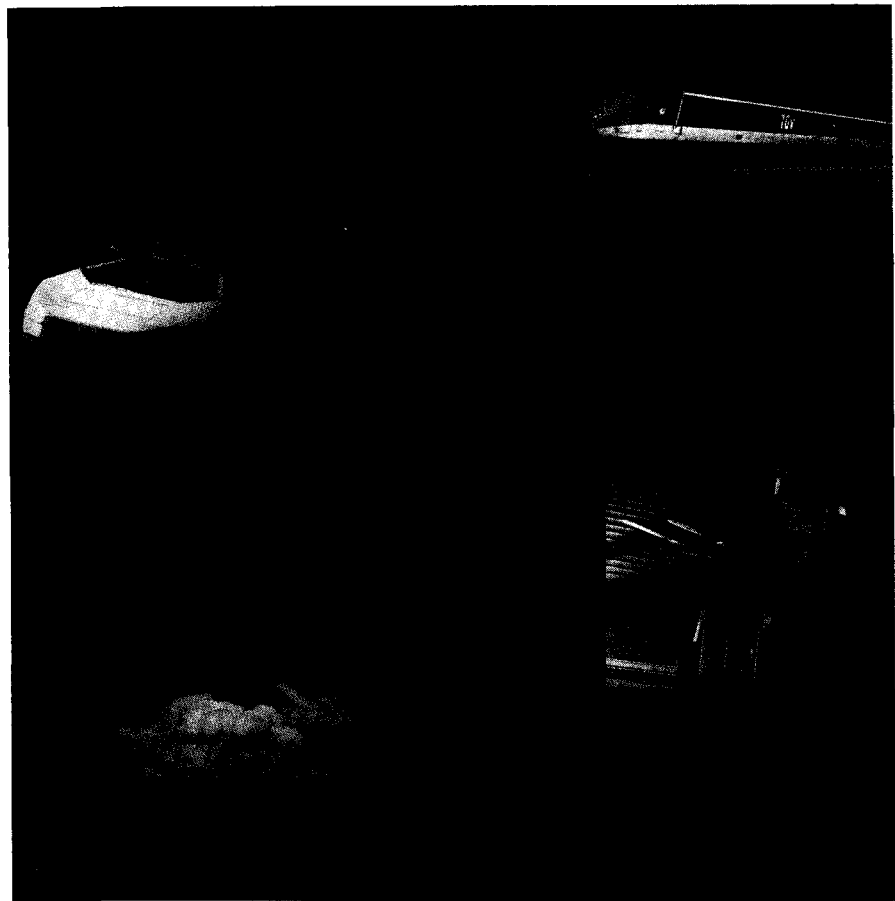
were contagious, the kiss of death. Now I, too, recoiled, in an involuntary lapse of compassion.

I cannot mention the real name of the woman who first took me to the orphanage, which is in southern China, in a complex that houses some 300 to 350 children and 250 disabled or elderly adults. I will call her Christine.

The kind of work Christine is doing was one answer to my question about what good, beyond sheer economic prosperity, the Western business presence in China might be bringing to that nation. The question had bothered me during the 1993–1994 debate about whether to renew China’s most-favored-nation status. The public discussions had highlighted the gap between Americans who did business in China, most of whom wanted the renewal of MFN status, and human-rights advocates, who by and large supported the Clinton Administration’s initial requirement that China first make “significant, overall progress” on issues of human rights. Human-rights advocates were naturally suspicious of

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business, and the businesspeople's obvious economic interests weakened their argument that their presence in China was good for human rights. I was acquainted with numerous Western businesspeople in China and knew that many had come to love the country. I suspected that some were quietly involved in "good works," serving the cause of human rights while avoiding publicity. My hunch proved correct.

The wives of foreign businessmen and diplomats had formed an association, one foreign businessman and his wife told me over lunch in an elegant joint-venture hotel. They had "adopted" a local orphanage. A small group visited once a week. Most women, particularly those with small children, found visiting the orphanage too painful, but everyone contributed to the children's well-being—toys, clothing, shoes, quilts, screens to keep out the flies and mosquitoes. The couple gave me Christine's number. A resident of China for several years and an active volunteer, Christine was a regular visitor to the orphanage. I called her immediately.

The children who were old enough and able to walk were waiting at the windows when we arrived, broad smiles on

Others seemed retarded, though the foreign volunteers were convinced that what appeared as retardation was often really a failure to thrive, the result of too little love and attention.

The vast majority of the children, some 90 percent, were thought by the foreign volunteers to be girls, though this was not readily apparent. Their hair was cropped short, institutional-style, and their clothes were unisex shorts and T-shirts. Few of them were actually orphans. They had been abandoned—victims of China's one-child-per-family policy and of the traditional, economically motivated propensity to value males. Males both carry on the family line and provide for their parents in old age. Girls marry and then have obligations only to their husband's family. Rural China has no pension system. The retired depend for survival on their sons.

Recent census figures indicate how badly the Chinese want boys. In 1994 the worldwide sex ratio at birth was 101.5 boys for every 100 girls. In China there were 116 boys for every 100 girls. No one is certain what happens to the missing girls. Some may be aborted after a sonogram reveals a female fetus, though this practice was recently declared illegal. The traditional practice of female infanticide, described decades ago by Pearl S. Buck and Somerset Maugham, may still exist. Some baby girls may not be reported in the census. Rural families are often allowed to have two children. When the first is a girl, some families wait to record the birth until the second child proves to be a boy. Some baby girls are abandoned.

The orphanage I visited is on the outskirts of a city, but the little girls were presumed to have come mostly from rural backgrounds. China is in the midst of what must be the largest rural-to-urban migration in human history. In recent years perhaps 100 million of China's 900 million peasants have moved to cities in search of jobs. The baby girls are left at railway stations, in parks, and in front of police stations. The police are supposed to search for the parents, but most searches prove fruitless. The boys in the orphanage are for the most part severely handicapped, but they are often not abandoned, and may have family contact and visits.

Newly arrived infants are placed in a separate small room, which held about ten baby girls during my visits. Two or three staff members—untrained, minimally paid women from nearby villages who were struggling to support their own families—were on hand for the infants. The babies were cuddly, cute, and alert.

Adoption is not unusual in Chinese tradition. I have known several infertile urban couples who adopted a child from one of their married siblings. In rural areas, despite the economic value placed on boys, families without female children have sometimes adopted little girls. The current one-child-per-family policy makes domestic adoptions more difficult, however. A couple must be childless and at least thirty-five years old before regulations permit them to adopt. But the pediatrician in charge of the orphanage told me that "normal" infants do find new homes. Some forty babies had been adopted the previous year, more than twenty of them by foreigners and the rest, presumably, by Chinese. I watched one day as Susan Lee, a single Chinese-American woman who works for the Federal Aviation Administration, in Washington, D.C., met her new daughter, Rachel, then eight months old. The baby had been in the orphanage since only a few days after she was born. When I had dinner with the new family a few days later, Rachel, who had been alert and curious when I first saw her but had been unable to hold up her head, was already discernibly stronger.

Babies who are not adopted are eventually moved out of the infant room into what the foreign women call the toddlers' room, a much larger space with six rows of eight cribs each. Staffing is minimal there—three or four women for forty-eight children. The quality of care precipitously declines. It is almost impossible for the volunteers to guess the ages of the children. Many suffer such serious developmental delays that they appear and act much younger than they are. Children who have just been moved are generally placed in the middle two rows. They are given bottles but scant assistance in feeding, and the schedule is rigid. Some of the children grab their bottles and eat lustily, and some—often the same ones—demand attention, crying, spreading their arms to be held. Their

(Continued on page 38)

*One Western woman,
a volunteer in the
orphanage, bristles
at the suggestion that
children are being
allowed to die*

their faces. They exclaimed over Christine's oversize bag when we walked in, knowing it would be filled with crackers. Christine had a surprise for them that day—sneakers in bright colors and psychedelic designs, which she distributed to the barefoot children according to approximate size. The children tried them on, jumping and prancing and running, their thumbs up in the universal language of delight. They were an unruly, unsocialized group. Some were handicapped.

APRIL
1996

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

PREVIEW



Dance

The Evolution of
Swan Lake

Theater

Ben Jonson's
Wild Kingdom

Classical

Love On
and Off Stage

Jazz

Dave Holland's
Opus

Pop

New Music
in the Irish
Tradition

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Dance and Theater

BY AUSTIN BAER AND NANCY DALVA

FROM LATE BLOOMER TO PERENNIAL FAVORITE

If *The Nutcracker* is ballet's winter warhorse, *Swan Lake* carries the rest of the calendar. There is no ballet more popular or more subject to reconsideration. Even during its debut season, in Moscow in 1877, choreographers and composers were revising the scenario and adjusting the score, interpolating here and substituting there. Some fifteen years later, in St. Petersburg (one year after poor Tchaikovsky had died without a hint of his music's future

popularity), Marius Petipa and his assistant Lev Ivanov rechoreographed the entire ballet, divvying up the acts. Hence the blockbuster version of *Swan Lake*. Every serious production since has stood upon the shoulders of this one, whether faithfully or in full rebellion.

In 1940 the San Francisco Ballet, led by William Christensen, was the first company in America to produce a full-length *Swan Lake*. Following the tradition—but giving it his own spin—the current artistic director, Helgi Tomasson, unveiled his version in 1988. Following the concept of the production's designer, Jens-Jacob Worsaae, this *Swan* is set in the eighteenth century but with some modern streamlining for dramatic continuity. This month the company takes the ballet (and a mixed bill as well) to Zellerbach Hall, at the University of California at Berkeley (March 29–April 14; 415-865-2000). —N.D.



San Francisco Ballet's *Swan Lake*

ALL'S UNFAIR IN LOVE AND WAR

Meet, if you have not yet done so, Ödön von Horváth (1901–1938), the shorter-lived, lesser-known contemporary of Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956), to whom influential voices in Germany and Austria have even declared Horváth superior. A scion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which he regarded as “rotten,” Horváth invented a style that bespeaks its period yet recalls no one else: clipped, plainspoken, disenchanted. A spirit of swift, sweeping perception that prompts other writers to aphorism became in Horváth the very soul of dramatic structure. Take *Don Juan Comes Back From the War*, which opens this month at Manhattan's Classic Stage Company (April 8–May 4; 212-677-4210). Wounded, prey to hallucinations, blank, the anti-hero wanders through the wintry Mitteleuropa of 1918, the lone man in the play. Perhaps for this reason, cranky women of every age and station (nine actresses in some three dozen roles) fling themselves at him, but his heart is fixed on his fiancée, whose grandmother has been vindictively hoarding his letters. Not until the final scene does Don Juan discover that the woman he yearns for is long dead. What does it mean to have told this tale of shattered love not through Everyman or Anyman but through the rake of legend? War, statesmen think, is the continuation of diplomacy by other means. Horváth's enigmatic parable speaks to the personal cost of that difference. —A.B.



BOTH SIDES NOW

The choreographer Lila York has enjoyed a long association with the Paul Taylor Dance Company. For twelve happy years, in more than thirty dances, she filled the role Taylor called the “runt,” although in her case a better term would be “sprite.” She was the troupe's Tinkerbelle, light-footed and tenderhearted. York has gone on to stage Taylor's work for other companies while also making dances of her own. This month the Pacific Northwest Ballet opens its program with the first movement of her critically acclaimed *Rapture* (Seattle Center Opera House, April 2–6 and 11; 206-292-2787). Meanwhile, the Boston Ballet's *Hot & Cool* introduces York's latest, *Celts*, set to Celtic tunes (Wang Center



Celts costume sketches

for the Performing Arts, March 21–April 7; 617-931-2787). “I took a lot of the steps and rhythms and shapes of Irish step-dancing and adapted them to ballet,” York says. “It was a good eye-opener, and a mind-opener, too.” And not just for the choreographer: an excerpt from the dance was the featured half-time entertainment at a Boston Celtics game in November. Slam dunk! —N.D.

WHERE THERE'S NO WILL, THERE'S VOLPONE

Three cheers for The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., which for its last show of the season gives the house playwright a rest and welcomes Mosca (the Fly), Voltore (the Vulture), and all the rest of the bestiary that makes up the cast of *Volpone; or, The Fox* (April 16–June 7; 202-393-2700). Diamond-hard, diamond-clear, Ben Jonson's comedy is a jewel too seldom brought forth to glitter in the light. The first edition, a quarto of 1607, featured testimonials by such notables as John Donne and George Chapman, not to mention a dedication

Ben Jonson



to the universities of Cambridge and Oxford, where the play had won great favor. Of course, the classical learning that pleased the scholars is lost on most audiences nowadays. But Jonson's subject (greed) remains as timely as it ever was; the central conceit still hits the mark (all the world's a zoo); and the clockwork elegance of his design (a Venetian cotillion of animals) has lost none of its spring. —A.B.

Austin Baer is a writer based in New York.
Nancy Dalva is a contributor to Dance Ink.

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Classical Music

BY AUSTIN BAER

A MATCH MADE FOR THE MET

Two years ago, in *La Bohème* at London's Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, a Rumanian Mimi named Angela Gheorghiu knocked on the garret door of an Italian-French Rodolfo named Roberto Alagna, requested a light for her candle, and precipitated a heart-wrenching love affair. He with his mischievous smile, she with her soulful eyes . . . they made a fetching pair. Vocally, too, they were beautifully matched, each blessed with a distinctive, touching timbre, each excellently schooled and spontaneously expressive. Audiences wept, but when the curtain fell, Puccini's Bohemians went their separate ways. A year later Gheorghiu and



The happy pair



Alagna met up again, and this time life imitated art. Today they are opera's golden couple, in demand as a pair around the world. In the recording studio they have collaborated on a program of duets and on Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* (both forthcoming on EMI Classics). In the opera house not all their projects coincide: there is no suitable role for her in Verdi's *Don Carlos* (in which Alagna sang this winter in Paris), nor is there one for him in Puccini's *Turandot* (in which she portrayed the slave girl Liù at the Met during the same period). But they join forces when they can, as in performances of *La Bohème* this month at the Met (April 10, 13, 24, and 27; 212-362-6000).

TAKING POETIC LIBERTIES

In Paris the Terror rages. In prison a poet awaits execution, rapt with the thought that his dying breath will clinch the rhyme in the poem that is his life. Yes, this is grand opera, and against high standards it definitely qualifies as over the top. Umberto Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* embroiders freely on the history of the obscure poet and journalist André Chénier (1762-1794), frequently calling to mind works both better and better-known: *A Tale of Two Cities*, for instance, with its lofty self-sacrifice en route to the guillotine, or *Tosca* (which was written later), for the strong-arm political tactics in the service of wicked lust. If *Chénier*'s scenario is both sketchy and

far-fetched, the score's proto-cinematic flow and sensitivity to atmosphere display craftsmanship verging on genius. A hundred years after its world premiere the right cast could make the protagonists' unabashed surrender to woes and ecstasies that are absurdly larger than life hard to resist. Above all, a go-for-broke star tenor must be found to keep the abundant fuel of Chénier's idealism ablaze with an unstinting flame of conviction and ringing tone. Who, for instance? At the age of sixty-one, Luciano Pavarotti plays

the part for the first time, in a new production at the Metropolitan Opera (April 6-25; 212-362-6000). Truth to tell, his lyric instrument is underweight for the beefy assignment. Still, his honesty and commitment could carry the day. At the Seattle Opera later this month the strapping

Canadian tenor Ben Heppner sings Chénier. He is forty and in his prime, and though he may not have Pavarotti's Latin pathos, Heppner's voice is exactly the sort Giordano had in mind (April 27, May 1, 4, 8, and 11; 206-389-7676).

Austin Baer is a writer based in New York.

THE DRESDEN SOUND

Call him flashy; call him grandiose. But unfashionable? Apart from a performance of *An Alpine Symphony* by the Vienna Philharmonic last month, the music of Richard Strauss (1864-1949) will be presented by Carnegie Hall only twice this spring: in two all-Strauss programs by the Dresden Staatskapelle. Signals notwithstanding, Strauss is in no danger of going out of style. Few composers give an orchestra better chances to show its stuff. Voluptuous to listen to (which endears it to audiences), the music is also devilishly hard



A close look at Sinopoli and his orchestra



to play. Ambitious virtuosi find the combination irresistible, which in itself would guarantee Strauss's immortality. Dresden's orchestra was a favorite with Strauss; he

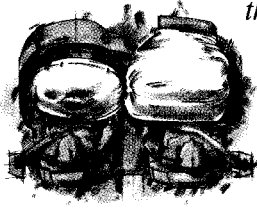
led it often. And Strauss is a favorite with Giuseppe Sinopoli, the orchestra's current music director, a conductor much drawn to alchemical color effects, as his Strauss recordings for Deutsche Grammophon attest. At Carnegie Hall he leads the season's second interpretation of the crashing *Alpine Symphony*, coupled with the dark *Metamorphosen* (April 15; 212-247-7800). A second program combines the ravishing *Don Juan*, the autumnal *Four Last Songs*, and the self-dramatizing spiritual autobiography *Ein Heldenleben* (April 16). For information on the remainder of the Staatskapelle's current American tour (April 14-28), see listings in Greenvale, New York; New Brunswick, New Jersey; Champaign-Urbana, Illinois; Overland Park, Kansas; Ames, Iowa; San Francisco, Palm Desert, Santa Barbara, and Costa Mesa, California.



The Met's set design (top)
The Seattle Opera's set (middle)
Ben Heppner (bottom)



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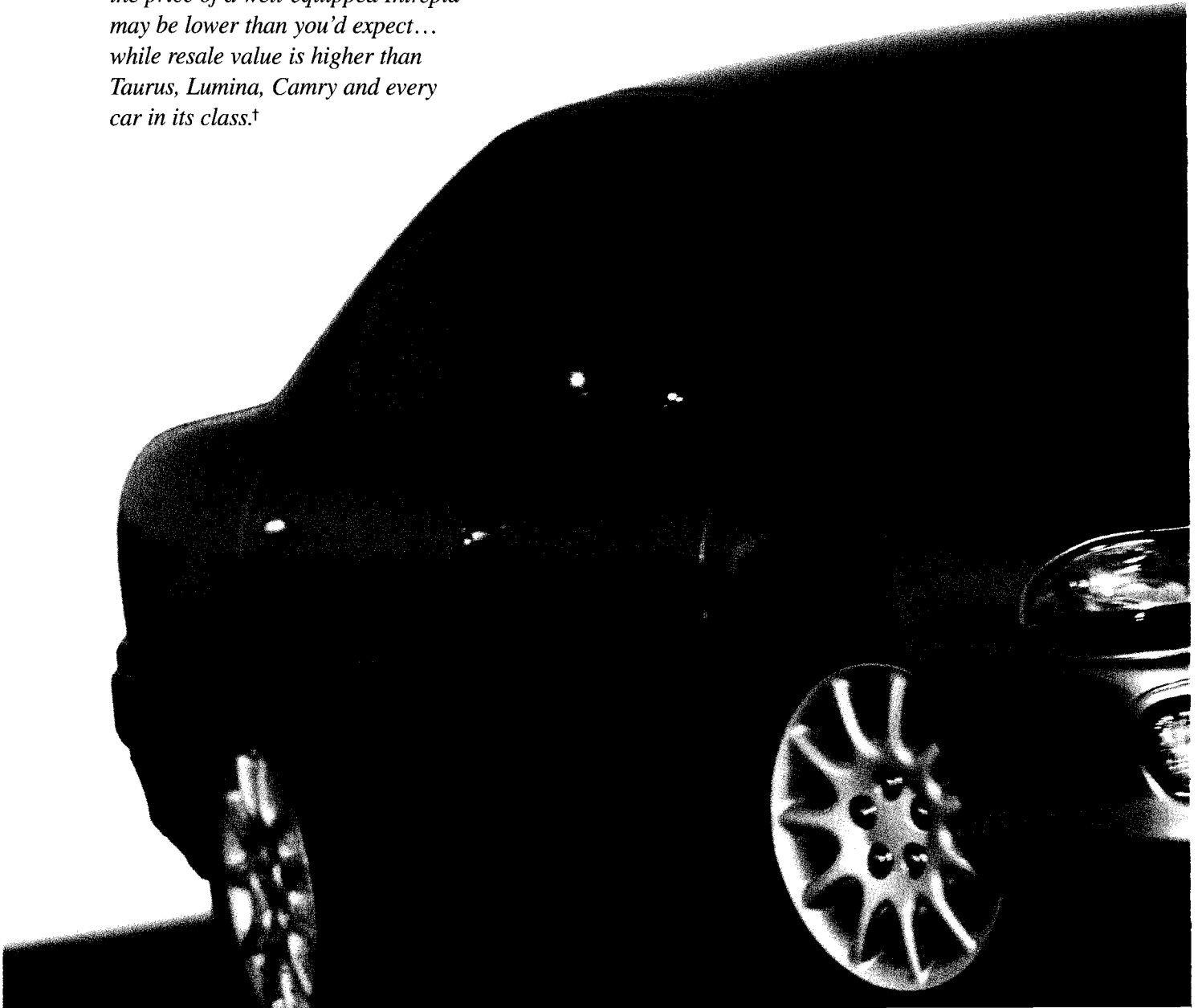


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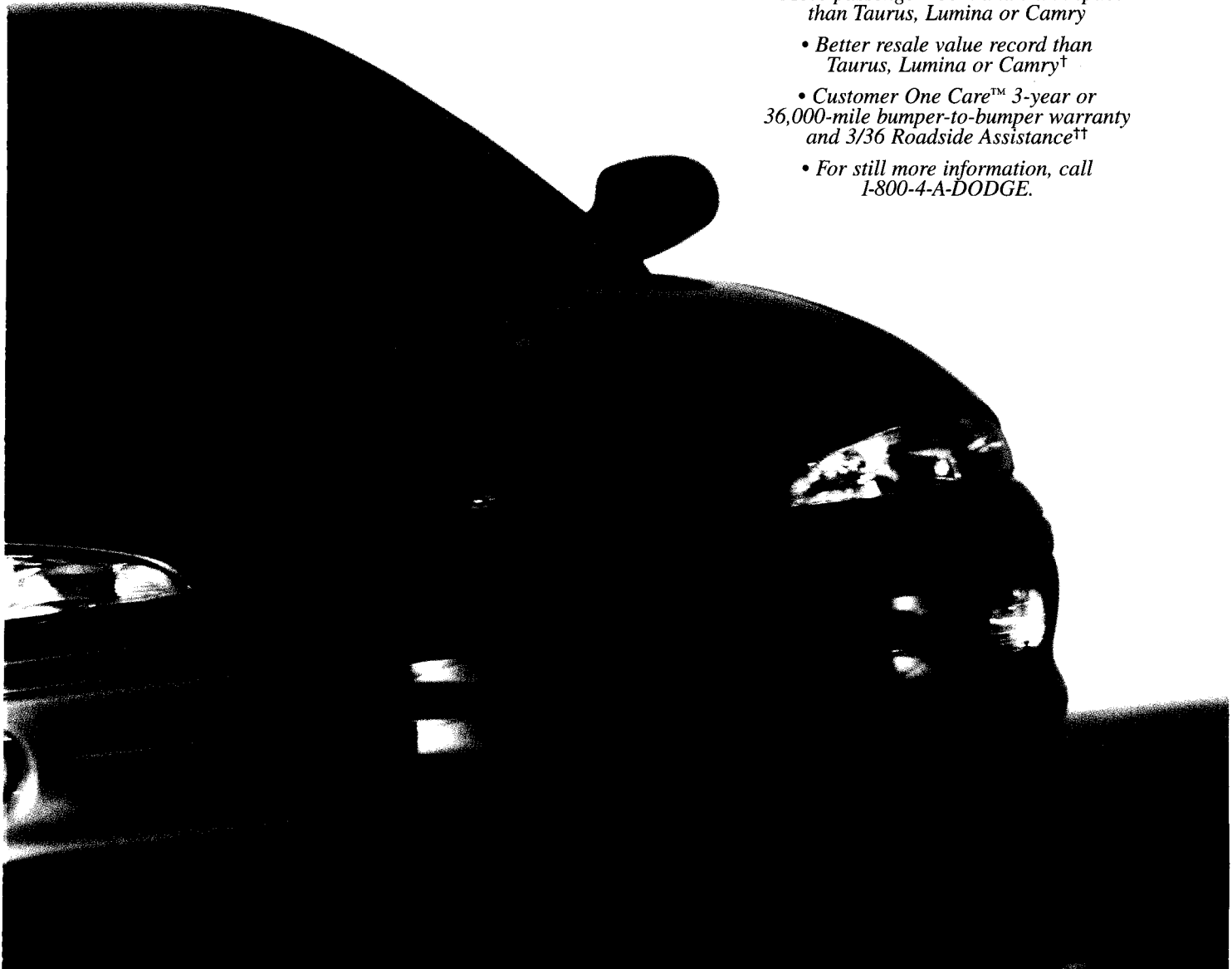
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Popular Music and Jazz

BY BOB BLUMENTHAL AND CHARLES M. YOUNG



THREE'S THE CHARM

The bassist Dave Holland triumphs on three recent albums. *Homecoming* (ECM), by the cooperative trio Gateway, finds him in a loose and playfully explosive mood. *Ones All* (Intuition), a glowing solo recital, emphasizes Holland's technique and keen historical perspective. The most recent, *Dream of the Elders* (ECM), which introduces his new quartet, reminds us that Holland is also an exceptional composer and bandleader.

The new band is a forum for the younger players to realize their budding personalities. In more than a decade of recording, the vibist Steve Nelson has never found a better setting for his angular yet sparkling ideas, and the drummer Gene Jackson finally adds nuance to his formidable power. Eric Person, heard primarily on the alto saxophone, is the greatest revelation—his patient, melodic solos make even the knottiest tunes sing.

Holland's music might be called deceptively complex—metric labyrinths and frequent shifts in time signature are mediated by graceful themes that stick in the mind. Holland's setting of the Maya Angelou poem "Equality," featuring the guest vocalist Cassandra Wilson, gives the most obvious example of his lyricism, although even the hard-swinging pieces retain a warm undercurrent. As the bassist, Holland is an unbroken line that occasionally peeks through in solo yet is no less eloquent when heard in support. *Elders's* extended performances may get limited air play even though the keen balance of the quartet and Holland's omnipresent logic ensure clarity and coherence. —B.B.

Bob Blumenthal is a jazz critic for The Boston Globe.

Charles M. Young reviews popular music for Playboy, Musician, and other publications.

Greg Dulli, the guitarist-singer-songwriter of the Afghan Whigs, occupies a bleak cosmos in which the possibility of love means the possibility of lies, betrayal, cruelty, craving, self-recrimination, significant-other-recrimination, and unrelieved misery for all eternity. Therefore he is a pillar of alternative rock, and the Afghan Whigs' latest album, *Black Love* (Elektra), will speak to anyone whose relationship is crumbling and who indeed expects to feel unrelieved misery for all eternity. "Beware of who you trust in this world," he sings in "Blame, Etc." "Beware the lies about to unfurl." Like someone who can't stop wig-



Dulli fronting the Afghan Whigs

gling a loose tooth, however, Dulli keeps returning to the scene of his pain. By the end of *Black Love* he seems to have relented in "Summer's Kiss" and "Faded"—two songs in which Dulli addresses his lover in civil terms, offering himself as someone to believe in, wishing that she were someone he could believe in—although he has hardly freed himself from his doomed cosmos. "The secret's gonna kill you," he sings in the final lines of the final song. "In the end it's gonna kill you." Well, something's going to kill you, so it might as well be love.

Until then you can listen to some cathartic guitar bashing. —C.M.Y.

A SOFTER SOUND FROM THE EMERALD ISLE

Born in Philadelphia, raised in Ireland, Seamus Egan won four All-Ireland music championships, on the flute, the tenor banjo, the mandolin, and the tin whistle, at the age of fifteen. He also plays the guitar, the uilleann pipes, and the bodhrán (a goatskin hand drum). Lest you roll your eyes at the thought of another child prodigy long on virtuosity and short on feeling, you should know that Egan is now twenty-six and has the sort of extended résumé that would lead one to sus-



pect all kinds of feeling in his music. Why else would he be doing so many sessions with other prominent musicians, not to mention the soundtrack for *The Brothers McMullen*? On his third solo album, *When Juniper Sleeps* (Shanachie), Egan goes for the contemplative side of traditional Irish music. You won't dance a jig (except maybe on "The Czar of Munster"), you won't sing along (it's all instrumental), and you'll marvel at Egan's virtuosity only where he wants

you marveling. Mostly what you'll do is sit there and think your own deep thoughts. For all his flash, Egan really knows what to do with a quiet ballad, surrounding a delicate melody with plenty of space for the listener's own emotions to color. Purists might object to a tinge of New Age, but when were purists ever right about anything? Egan captures the majesty of traditional Irish music and then nudges it just enough to make it his own. —C.M.Y.

DODGE

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Correct entries for the Arts & Entertainment Challenge will be eligible for a grand prize—I Got Rhythm: The Music of George Gershwin, the four-CD boxed set reviewed in our December issue (see attached card for details).

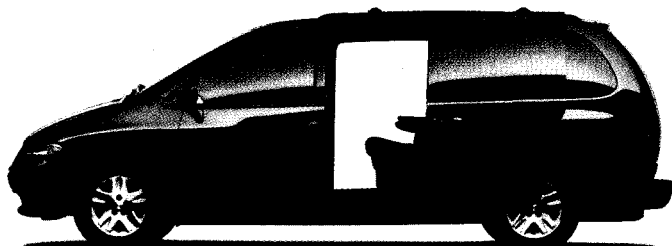
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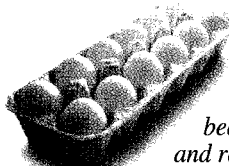
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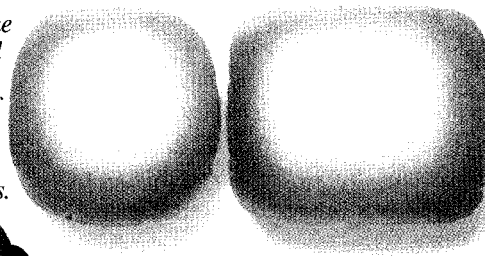
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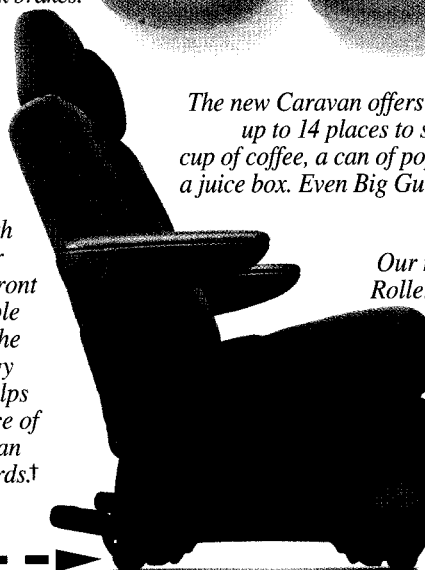
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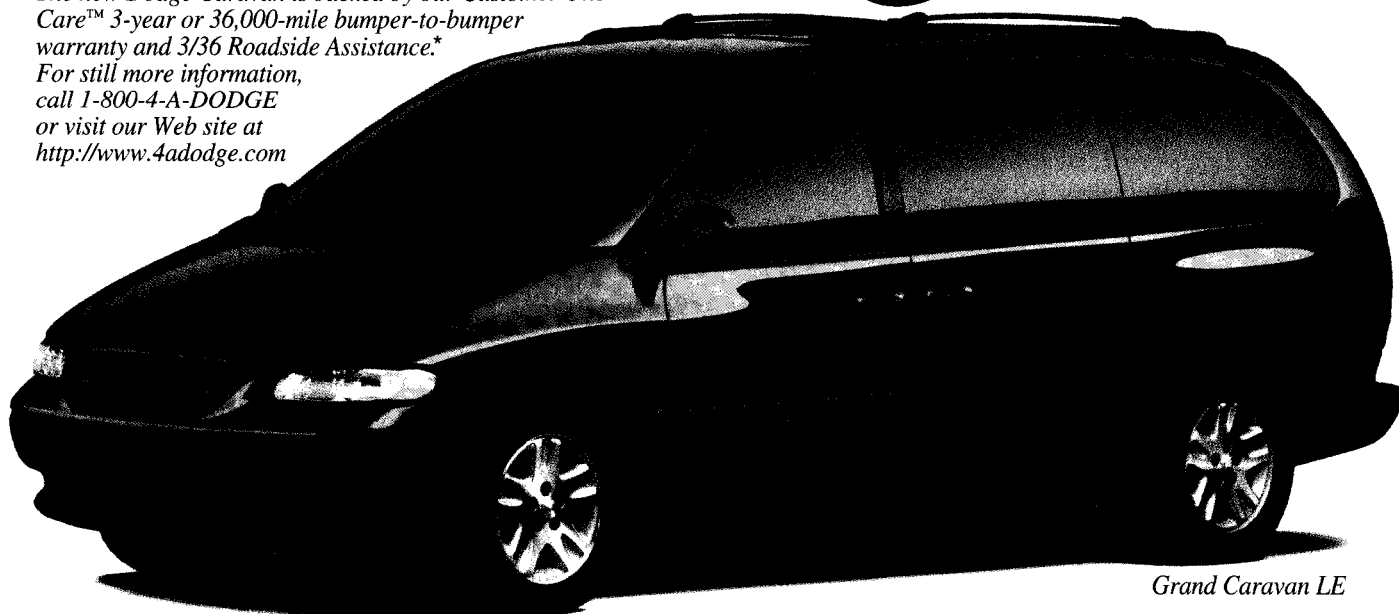
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The New Dodge Caravan

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(Continued from page 30)

eyes beg for human warmth and affection. Others are already passive and withdrawn. Their bottles lie untouched, as though they are too weak, too indifferent, or still too young to make the effort. When feeding time is over, even the unfinished bottles are collected.

For the most part those who struggle and survive are eventually moved to the first two rows, although there are no hard and fast rules. When passive children be-

Early in this century investigators doing research in foundling homes in the West found alarmingly high death rates

come weak, they are moved to the last two rows—by whose decision or according to what criteria, we never learned. In the months that I visited the orphanage, from October to December of 1994, I never saw the children in these cribs being fed. Christine, who has been visiting for more than two and a half years, has sometimes seen the children fed, but has never seen any of them recover. Rather, she has watched them disappear, to be replaced by new arrivals.

What Westerners call the dying room is tucked away outside, adjacent to the place where sick children are tended. Different babies were there each time I visited, so stiff and quiet, their breathing so faint, that the end could not have been far. A couple had uncorrected cleft palates. They were not being tended, nor was there any obvious sign of medical treatment.

Christine has come to accept the deaths. She has to in order to work there. She visits the dying children each week, taking a mental count, but she never touches or holds them. She feels that such human contact would be cruel to children who have never known warmth or affection or holding, and would perhaps prolong their dying. Instead she

gives all her energy and unconditional love to the little ones who respond to it energetically. She and other volunteers cuddle and feed and heap copious praise on the children, who light up in their presence. A Christian-based group also visits weekly, and so do Chinese students from nearby universities. When I visited, a team of doctors from Hawaii had recently assisted Chinese physicians in performing surgery on some of the children, and the pediatrician in charge of the orphanage was soon to receive several months' training in Hong Kong, where orphanages are exceptionally well run. The situation in the orphanage, most of the foreigners seem to agree, is already several times better than when they began volunteering.

The deaths of helpless children are haunting. We need to know how innocent babies can deliberately be allowed to die. Since my visits several exposés of Chinese orphanages have received widespread publicity. Last June the independent British television station Channel 4 ran a documentary called "The Dying Rooms," filmed by three journalists posing as workers from an American orphanage. They were graciously welcomed into at least one of the institutions they visited, as Christine and many other foreign volunteers have been. Last August, CBS's *Eye to Eye* also ran a segment on Chinese orphanages, incorporating excerpts from the British program and interviewing both its producers and Chinese officials. The footage is shocking, but what it shows is familiar to anyone who has visited the orphanages. Kate Blewett, one of the producers, is understandably distraught, outraged at what her investigation unearthed. The Chinese officials do not come off well, particularly when they deny the existence of what the camera has already revealed—such as dying rooms. This past January, Human Rights Watch/Asia published a lengthy report asserting that thousands of children in Chinese orphanages have died of starvation and medical neglect. And both Channel 4 and CBS's *60 Minutes* have done follow-ups to the latest exposé. Again, the Chinese government's response has been defensive and unconvincing. "Dying rooms do not exist in China," the Foreign Ministry spokesman Chen Jian has asserted. But they

do exist. I visited one six times over a period of a few months.

The official response to all these exposés highlights the painful quandary confronting Americans concerned with human-rights abuses in China. In the long run public revelations about China's orphanages may encourage the Chinese government to ameliorate the situation. In the short run, however, the plight of children already in orphanages may worsen. Since the Human Rights Watch/Asia report some American would-be parents of Chinese baby girls have been told to postpone their trips even when the adoption procedures are so far along that the new families already have pictures of their future daughters. Some hoping to adopt Chinese babies are afraid that with continuing adverse publicity China may halt adoptions altogether. Visits by Christine and other foreign volunteers had been temporarily suspended at the time of this writing, although they believed that they would be allowed to return soon after the Chinese New Year, on February 19.

That is why Christine is so reluctant to let me use her real name. "I would be devastated," she wrote me, "if the result of any of my actions would deny these children the few pleasures in life they now enjoy." Her concerns are shared by many foreign volunteers in China, who recognize the world's right to know but believe that change is best effected on the ground, through quiet cooperation rather than confrontation. But the exposés have demonized China just as U.S.-China relations are settling into a more troubled period. American public opinion toward China has typically swung between extremes of admiration and mistrust, as we project our own hopes and fears on a country we have consistently misunderstood. China is never as good or as bad as we think it is.

The foreigners who visit the orphanage every week do not claim to understand what is happening there. Each has had to come up with her own tentative, often unsatisfactory explanation and way of coping. Valorie Stackpole, the wife of an American businessman in China, still wonders about the real value of what she is doing—whether the few hours of play and nurturing she is able to give the children each week have any real effect. She questions whether out-



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siders can or should try to change a 5,000-year-old culture. Perhaps, she thinks, the visits are of more benefit to the foreigners, who are trying to help, than to the Chinese, who have such difficulty accepting our charity. She points out that the death of a child is never pretty, and urges me to visit the Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C., where I live. Conditions are modern and sterile there, but the sight of abandoned babies is no less tragic. Part of the reason she goes to the orphanage is that she believes her visits serve as a moral example to the Chinese staff, teaching that even handicapped, abandoned children deserve nurturing and love.

One woman who was among the first volunteers in the orphanage bristles at the suggestion that children are being allowed to die. She does not believe it, and wishes I had not even raised the question.

Bobbie Boudreau, a specialist in child development who taught at the University of Cincinnati before her husband's job brought her to China, and who is now a regular visitor to the orphanage, recalls the lessons in detachment she once taught her college students. How, without detaching, can people whose daily

In even the best-equipped, most hygienic facilities children with anacletic depression are highly susceptible to illness

work is tragedy return home to normal and happy family lives? Perhaps the apparent indifference of some on the orphanage staff is instinctive detachment, the preservation of emotion for their own poor and needy families. Boudreau believes in the value of training.

"Why don't they just kill them?" an American friend who had spent years in Asia wondered angrily. "We are kinder to our animals. At least we put them out of their misery."

MY own search for an explanation has taken months. After my initial recoil from the dying children, I determined to give something to every child on subsequent visits to the orphanage—to hold and touch each one, and to feed the ones who could be fed. I stroked the hands and faces of the children who were dying and prayed that they be taken quickly, without pain, and that China would find a way to end this needless sacrifice of life. Only one of the dying children showed any sign of response. "China has too many children," a staff member said to me bitterly as I stood by the cribs.

I called upon Chinese friends for explanations, wondering whether the deaths were rooted somewhere in Chinese culture, perhaps in a different conception of what it means to be fully human. I have never known a Chinese to have moral qualms about abortion. In the Chinese view, fetuses are not yet human. Families do not traditionally celebrate a new birth until the baby is a month old. Historically, infant mortality was high in China, and the child was particularly at risk during the first month of life. Only when a child was past the maximum danger point was its arrival noted ceremonially. Too, the family is all-important in China; identity is embedded there. Perhaps children without families are denied the right to full humanity.

The pediatrician in charge of the orphanage would not discuss the deaths. The numbers were confidential, she told me. Chinese friends agreed that the deaths had cultural roots, and they assumed that the children being allowed to die were handicapped. Had not the director of the orphanage assured me that the normal babies were adopted? Burton Pasternak, an anthropologist who has spent time in Chinese rural areas, has been struck by how successfully people with Down syndrome and minor handicaps are integrated into village life. But for years Chinese friends had been telling me that severely handicapped infants—those with incapacitating infirmities requiring full-time care—are routinely allowed to die. "Everyone knows that a newborn baby will die after three days without feeding," one reminded me.

In the Buddhist tradition a severe handicap would be unmistakable evidence of a heinous crime in a previous life, for

which the handicap was punishment. Better, then, to let the child die and look forward to the next reincarnation. Its crimes had been expiated. The next life would be better. In the Confucian tradition a severely handicapped child would be incapable of fulfilling the immutable demands of filial piety and thus unable to behave as a proper human being.

A doctor I know, a man of great compassion, reminded me of the history of political oppression in China. The best of his people have suffered the most egregious persecution, he pointed out. If the very best are persecuted, does it not follow that those of so little official worth—the handicapped and abandoned—should be allowed to die?

My discussions with Chinese friends made clear both the absence of a concept of equality in Chinese culture and the fact that the handicapped are even lower in the social hierarchy than girls. But the tragedy of China's orphanages cannot be fully explained by Chinese culture. My friends assumed that only the handicapped were being allowed to die, but many of the dying children had no apparent handicaps, whereas most of the older children did. The children's handicaps were not the full explanation for why some were being allowed to die.

At an elegant dinner party in Washington a few weeks after my return I was seated next to a child psychiatrist. I told him what I had seen. "In a holocaust or war," he said, "you do not put the best surgeon in the operating room. You put him at the entrance. His job must be to decide who can be saved and who cannot. The behavior of the children you describe was so profoundly autistic that even if by some miracle they were suddenly to receive twenty-four-hour loving, mothering care, they could not have been saved." The orphanage was practicing triage. My attempt to offer comfort to the dying had been more for my benefit than for the children's, he said. They were too withdrawn to understand.

WHAT is happening in China has parallels in the United States and elsewhere in the West. The first orphanage in the United States was founded in 1729 by an Ursuline convent in New Orleans, after an Indian attack left many children without parents. But the history of our orphanages, and of our treatment

of homeless and indigent children, has not always been commendable. Early in this century, when systematic research on foundling homes began, investigators discovered alarmingly high death rates in the first year of the institutionalized children's lives—71 percent in one of Germany's great foundling homes, 90 percent in Baltimore, probably 100 percent at the Randall's Island Hospital, in New York City. Many of the children who lived suffered devastating physical and psychological damage.

René A. Spitz, in the mid-1940s, was one of the first to describe what happened to very young children who spent prolonged periods in institutions where they had no contact with their mothers. Previously happy and outgoing children from six to eleven months old became first weepy and then withdrawn, refusing to take an interest in their surroundings. After three months, Spitz wrote,

A sort of frozen rigidity of expression appeared instead. These children would lie or sit with wide-open, expressionless eyes, frozen immobile face, and a faraway expression as if in a daze, apparently not perceiving what went on in their environment. . . . Contact with children who arrived at this stage became increasingly difficult and finally impossible.

Many were unable, or refused, to eat. Spitz described the syndrome not as autism, which experts now believe to have physiological causes unrelated to maternal care, but as anaclitic depression. In one institution nineteen of 123 children studied suffered severe anaclitic depression, and another twenty-six exhibited the syndrome in a milder form.

In even the best-equipped facilities and under the most hygienic conditions children with anaclitic depression are highly susceptible to infection and illness. Thirty-four of ninety-one children whom Spitz, in one study, observed in a foundling home over a two-year period died of diseases ranging from intestinal infections to measles.

Much of what we know today about infants' need for love and stimulation, and about children's failure to thrive in their absence, can be traced directly to studies that began in foundling homes. Children are vitally dependent on the tenderness, affection, and stimulation that we associate with maternal love.

Revelations of what happened to children in Western institutions led to "child-rescue" movements, the introduction of foster care, and the establishment of "anti-institutional institutions." Spitz and others found that up to a certain point the effects of the absence of maternal love are reversible. The baby's psychic wounds may heal, but only with the addition of loving, motherly care. In all but exceptional circumstances (and in the United States the exceptions are increasing—see "When Parents Are Not in the Best Interests of the Child," July, 1994, *Atlantic*) the best solution for children without parents is adoption.

As the movement against the warehousing of children succeeded, and as institutions themselves improved, psychiatrists were rarely confronted with children who had never been held or loved, and the term "anaclitic depression" receded from the psychological literature. But everything about the demeanor of the dying Chinese children is consistent with Spitz's description of the progression of profound infant depression. So is the fate of the children. Shortly after my last visit to the orphanage, as fall was giving way to winter, Christine returned to discover that sixteen children were gone. She does not know what happened to them. The history of orphanages in the United States suggests that even a minor infection could have swept them away.

Western experts were discovering what Spitz described as the "evil effect" of childhood institutionalization in the mid-1940s, just as the Communists were coming to power in China. Child psychiatry had not yet developed there, and the entire psychiatric profession was ultimately discredited under Mao's regime, which often treated mental illness as a failure of ideological education. During the Cultural Revolution, when most intellectuals were persecuted and physicians were sent to the countryside, the fledgling psychiatric profession was devastated. Only in recent years has it begun to revive. Only in recent months have I seen references in the Chinese press to a childhood illness resembling Spitz's anaclitic depression or the autism described by Bruno Bettelheim and others. The Chinese term means "the syndrome of isolation and loneliness."

What if ignorance and poverty are pri-

marily responsible for the deaths of Chinese babies? What if we accept as truth (because it is the truth) the statement by China's Ministry of Civil Affairs, which is responsible for the administration of orphanages nationwide, that "China is a developing country which has 70 million people who still do not have enough to eat or wear, and it faces many difficulties in raising and educating handicapped children and orphans"? What if neither the pediatrician in charge of the orphanage nor her staff have been introduced to the literature on the psychological effects of institutionalization on infants?

If we accept that the deplorable conditions in China's orphanages result from both poverty and the past harassment of the psychiatric profession, then perhaps we can find ways to share with China what we have learned from our own history of failure to nurture abandoned and orphaned children. Many in China, including some officials at the Ministry of Civil Affairs, continue to welcome our cooperation. Chan Kit-ying, a social worker from Hong Kong, has helped local Ministry of Civil Affairs officials in Nanning, Guanxi; a Nanning orphanage; and the Hong Kong orphanage Mother's Choice to introduce foster care, train orphanage staff, and connect the Nanning orphanage with international adoption agencies. The benefits to the children have been stunning.

For foreigners to have a lasting effect on the situation in China's orphanages, more trained people like Chan Kit-ying will have to be willing to work on the ground, in China, cooperating with Chinese officials and orphanage staff. But the learning process will be a lengthy one. Chinese orphanages will not improve overnight. In the meantime, both China and the United States have regularized the procedures for adoptions. Michael Chang, of the American consulate in Guangzhou, where immigration permits are issued, reports that adoptions of Chinese children by U.S. citizens have approximately doubled in the past year, to about 250 a month, and he expects the number to keep growing.

Within a generation Chinese men will be suffering from a shortage of women to marry, and little girls will be highly valued. Perhaps by then China will have had its own movement against the institutionalization of children. ☼



“It’s Lew, Babe, Just Lew”

*Innuendo as a way to
promotion*

MY husband works for a giant corporation we call the Widow-maker. After a fast start he’s had ten years without a promotion. He’s at his wits’ end. So I recommended that he try to distinguish himself there on Casual Wear Day, which is every Friday, when they’re allowed to wear their chinos and golf shirts.

“Go barefoot,” I recommended. “If your bosses come along, start yelling and yodeling—‘Turkey in the Straw.’

That’s the way to get noticed. Do that extra bit that the other fellow won’t.” He didn’t even bother to say no.

He likes his job and even has a nerdy briefcase. He gets high ratings, so why is this happening? Naturally, he doesn’t want to go completely bald while still at district level! I think there must be a way to help him.

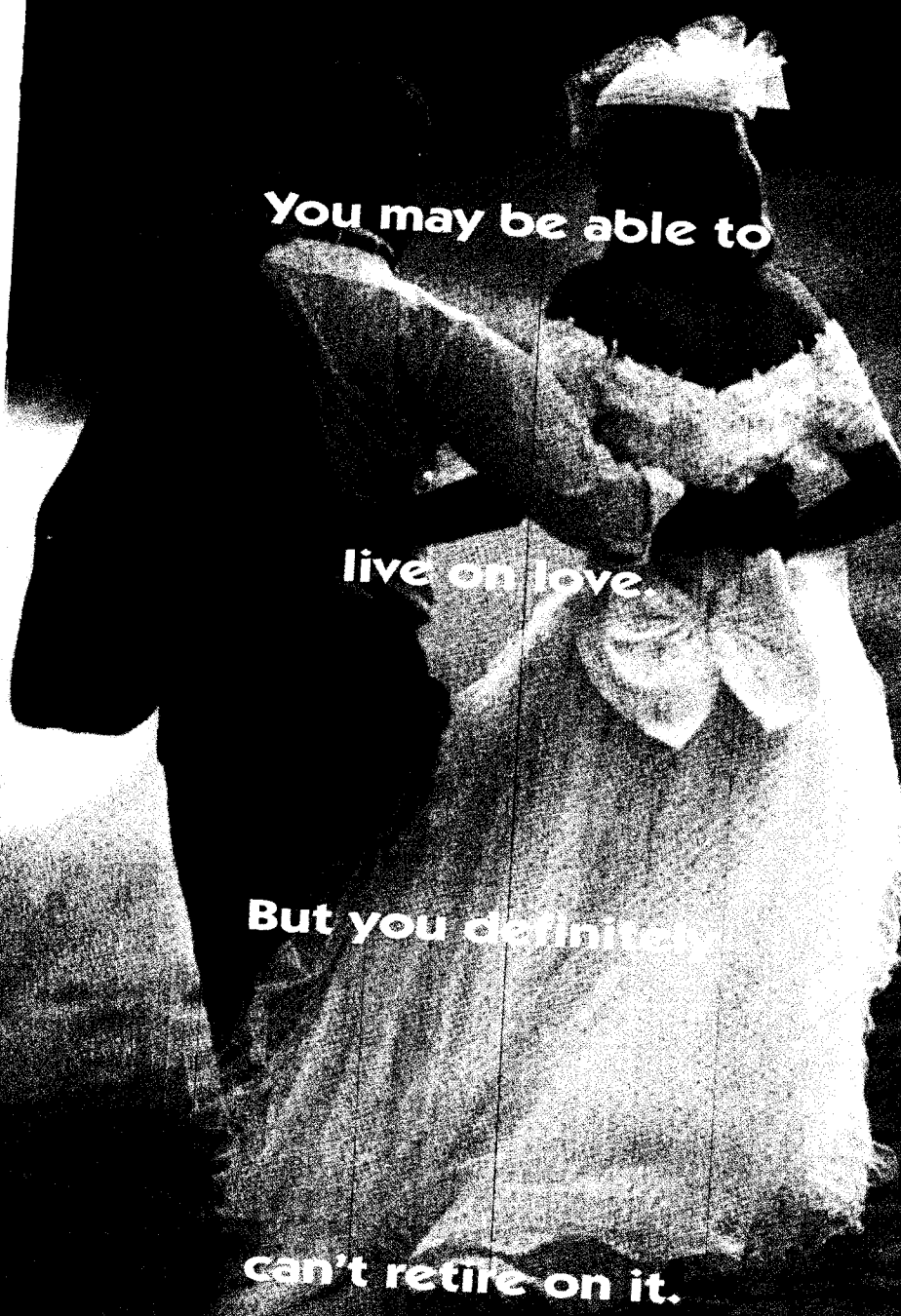
One evening in bed he was going over a report that he had to present the next day. It said on the cover “AGENDA:

Telco/Cable Cross-ownership.” I laughed and said, “Right below that you should put ‘HIDDEN AGENDA: My Advancement in This Company.’ They might feel sorry for you. Like, ‘Bob’s quite humorous. Let’s surprise him with a promotion!’”

But he could not get into it. I know that his strategy will remain plain old working hard year in and year out. Yet every so often he laughs horribly and says, “You’ll see, one of these days I’m going to make my move. I’m going to storm the ranks of middle middle management!” He’s really in a lot of pain.

Even if he got promoted, we’d still be in debt. Especially since he’d probably go straight out and install French drains in the basement or something, and they are not interesting, however they may sound. And then, too, I don’t have any important jewelry yet, so I might go ahead and get something, sure—but then I’d only be wearing it Friday nights, the nights we pop popcorn and rent videos.

by Lynn Caraganis



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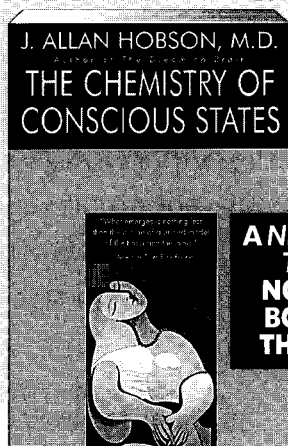
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BACK BAY BOOKS LITTLE, BROWN

However, I apparently do have the drive to succeed—even if meaninglessly—because I have come up with another idea, if only Bob will go for it. It's like this: The atmosphere over at the Widowmaker is a very wholesome one. "We're all deacons in the Methodist Church," they seem to be saying. Or "We all just about *could* be deacons in the Methodist Church." Now, my poor hubby is vying with about a million of these deacons. All of them—except that Long Island guy we sold our car to—seem this way. All of them are Republican, too, by the way—purely to do with their income taxes. If you ever ask them one thing about any other aspect of politics, they'll laugh and say, "Hey, remember, I'm just a tech weenie. I was *hired* as a tech weenie!" My husband was also hired as a tech weenie, but he doesn't care about it one way or the other.

They talk about their cars and their car maintenance all day, even though they now also have two young children to talk about. They are always saying they went to put oil in their wife's car and it took four quarts! It's happened to all the men at the Widowmaker at least once. Peering into that oil thing was just like gazing into a bottomless well of anxiety. And besides, if they have to go stand in a long line at the cafeteria, they'll say something like "Wish me luck; I'll need it!"

So that's the atmosphere over there, put on or genuine, as I perceive it from Widowmaker picnics, etc. Well, my husband could never beat them at that wholesomeness game, even if he does have a nerdy briefcase (which he shopped high and low for, so that he could use it like a desk on planes!). My idea, therefore, is for him to distinguish himself with an entirely different image around the office. I would like him to present himself as a sort of dark racketeer.

If he would just buy himself a shiny silver-gray suit and a pale-blue Countess Mara tie, and if he would change his name—and I mean change it to Lew Manette. Then he should become a loner. Then, next time he's presenting a report on Telco/Cable Cross-ownership, he should be seen to have kind of a bulge under his arm. And in the cafete-

ria, while they're swarming all over their chili dogs, he should tell them he's "nursing a single whiskey."

When they send him on trips to Washington, Boston, or San Francisco, he will cash in his plane ticket and drive without stopping in an old black Mercury Montego. Before he leaves, he will remind the travel agent not to bother about reserving a room—just to hand him some cash. This will get innuendo going.

Once a month or so I'll go into the office and hang around all day in red capri pants and a sharkskin halter. He won't acknowledge me or introduce me to anyone, and I'll keep my legs up on his desk, doing my nails. I'll look up indifferently when the United Way coordinator comes in.

When a vice-president says to him, "Bob, I mean 'Lew,' I'll be needing you to put together a twenty-minute speech for my meeting in San Francisco—you know, competition among the local exchange carriers—" my husband will lean way back in his chair and say, "Well, well . . ." in a sarcastic voice.

Of course, I don't know what the other man's reaction will be, but surely this approach has never been tried! Moreover, Lew's only concession to Casual Wear Day will be to remove his jacket and go around with the gun showing.

He will have no special relationship with his own secretary, but will get little chores out of whichever woman happens to cross his path as he moves among the cubicles like a lithe jungle cat. Sometimes, purely by accident, he'll ask something of his own secretary.

"Oh, Mr. Manette," she'll say, "I've been waiting and waiting for you to let me do something!"

He'll shrug and say, "It's Lew, babe, just Lew."

As always, jittery groups will form and re-form just outside his line of vision. One day someone will say, "He says his new name is Lew Manette."

"I'm not sure whether he deserves to be promoted," another will add in a tentative voice.

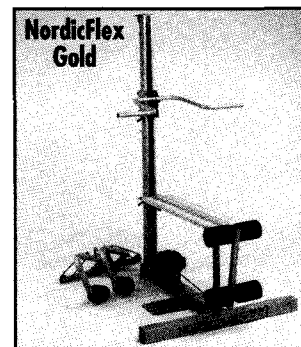
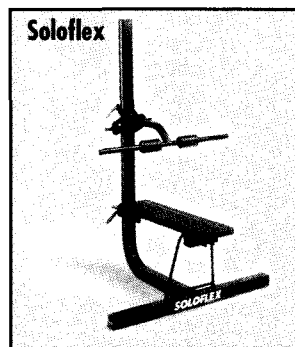
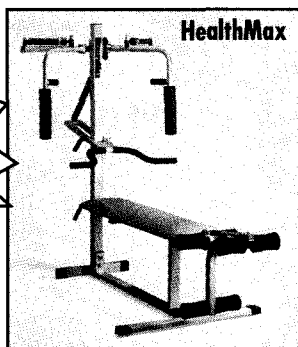
"He used to be okay! He was hired as a tech weenie!"

And then someone will murmur, "You'd better promote him, Willard. He could get riled up." ☼

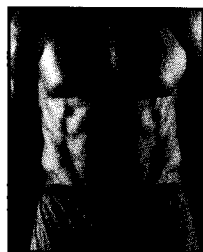
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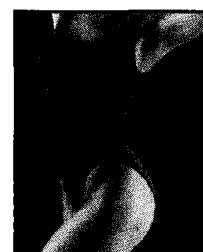


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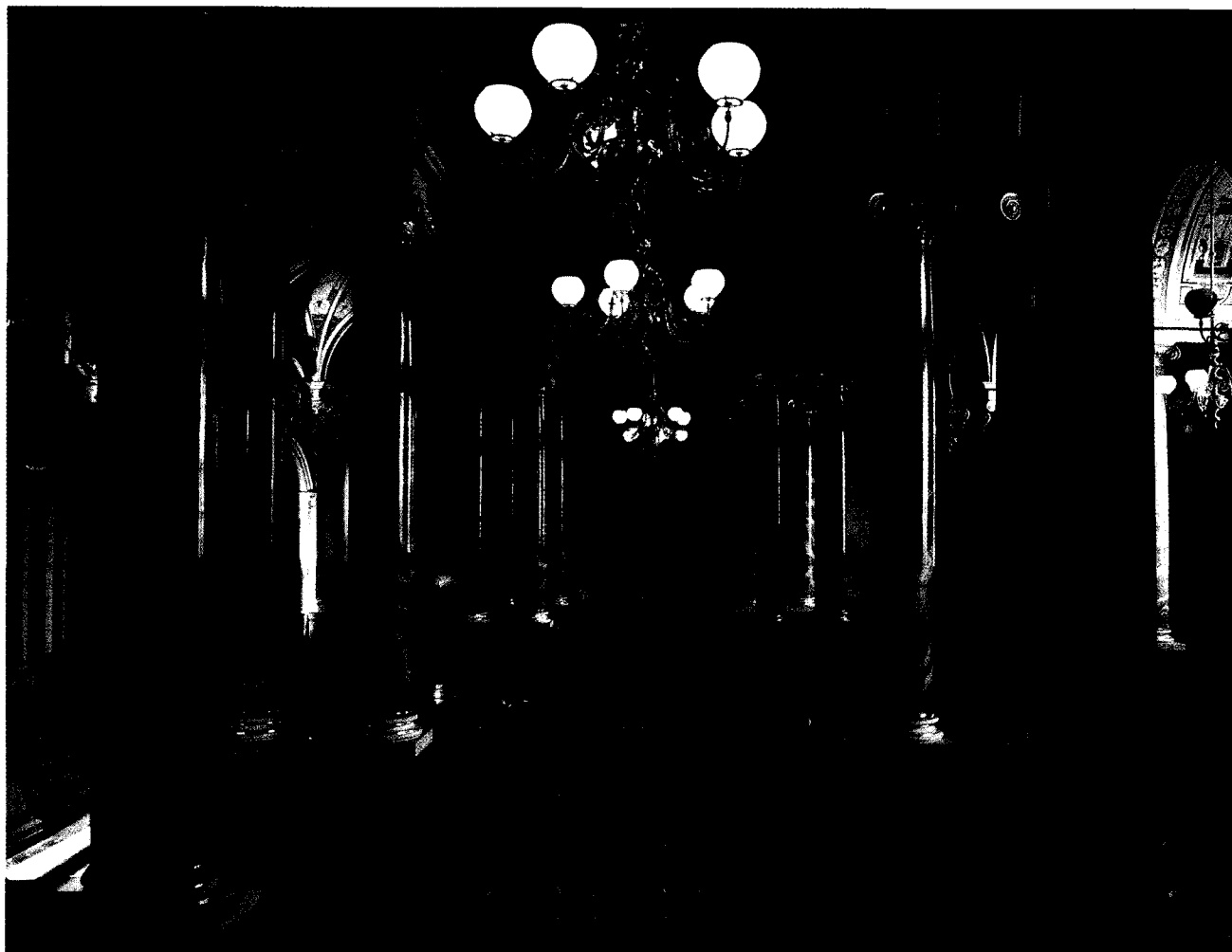
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The Old Made New

*East Germany's treasures are
once again a delight to see*

THE RAF called it Operation Thunderclap. On the night of February 13, 1945, which by macabre coincidence happened to be Fasching, the local Mardi Gras, the first of three waves of Allied bombers swept over Dresden, the Baroque jewel of Germany. Proud to be called the Florence of the Elbe, the Saxon capital was a cher-

*Dresden's Semper Opera, which
has been rebuilt twice*

by **R. W. Apple Jr.**

ished center of art, music, and learning, one of the shrines of Western civilization. It was unmarked until that moment by the awful pox of the Second World War. But by the time the third aerial assault ended, the next morning, it had been incinerated by more than 650,000 firebombs.

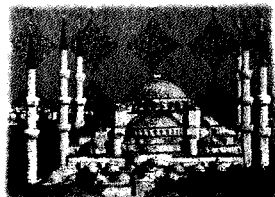
In a few hours of nameless horror at least 39,773 people died, roasted or suffocated or buried alive, and the actual total may have exceeded 100,000. More

than 1,600 acres were destroyed, including the richly ornamented center of the old city. Bridges and spires collapsed, the magnificent Zwinger Museum burned, and the Semper Opera was reduced to rubble. The Frauenkirche, the Lutheran Cathedral of Our Lady and its famous bell-shaped dome, survived the raids, as St. Paul's in London survived the worst night of the blitz, but the next day, with its stone skeleton weakened, it collapsed with a sigh. Only a few sad shards of smoke-blackened wall remained standing.

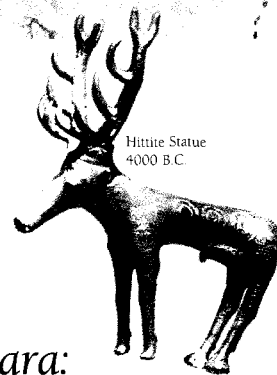
Dresden did not die, though the Communists, who took power in 1945, didn't help much, disfiguring the city with a sterile series of Stalinist boxes along Prager Strasse, which had been the Fifth Avenue of pre-war Dresden. While Frankfurt and Munich throbbed with postwar prosperity, Dresden settled into provincial mediocrity. Much remained unrestored—indeed, in the residential neighborhoods one still occasionally

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Above, the Zwinger Museum.
Below, the Frauenkirche project,
in progress and as planned.
Facing page, Raphael's Sistine
Madonna, in the Sempergalerie

sees a tree growing out of the window of a ruined apartment block—but very slowly a rebuilding program got under way, and with reunification, in 1990, it accelerated sharply.

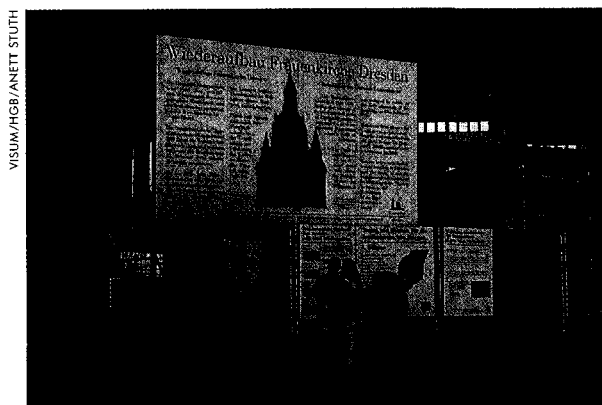
Last summer I returned to eastern Germany and to Dresden with my wife, Betsey. A decade before, we had been eyed by hostile, Uzi-toting East German cops as we ate dinner in a gloomy Hungarian restaurant. This time we got lost on the way home from an excursion and started up a one-way street the wrong way; noticing us studying a map, a policeman pulled up, asked cheerfully where we were headed, and led us back to our digs. Standing before the Frauenkirche, we were flanked no longer by weeds and rubble but by a snappy, well-run Hilton hotel and a kind of architectural ossuary, where the stones of the church have been cleaned, numbered, and laid under canopies. As if by magic, Cold War torpor has vanished. The Taschenbergpalais, built by the Baroque wizard Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann for the mistress of Prince August the Strong, has been restored as a Kempinski hotel. The nearby Zwinger is whole once more, as is the imposing Semper, where Wagner and Weber conducted,

and Strauss's *Rosenkavalier* and *Salome* were first produced. Now the Frauenkirche's turn has come. At a cost of more than \$150 million, most of it from private donations, the church will be rebuilt, blending old stone with new—a monument, in the words of Ludwig Gutler, the fundraising chairman, "to the moral will in our time to heal, start anew, and shape the future."

When completed, preferably by 2006, Dresden's eight-hundredth anniversary, the Frauenkirche will symbolize the rebirth of the historic region that lies south of Berlin and north of Bavaria. This land of Bach and Cranach, Luther and Goethe and Schiller, languished for almost half a century behind the Iron Curtain, much of it closed to tourism, the rest more labor than joy for Western-

ers to visit. Now, of course, it is totally accessible, and the expenditure of billions of deutschmarks has helped it begin, if only just, to catch up to the rest of Germany.

Still, pollution remains a problem, with many factories burning lignite and some, like one we passed near Leuna, south of Halle, spewing tons of sulfurous smoke into the air. The autobahns and other main highways are excellent, but turn onto secondary routes and you will find giant potholes, rough cobblestones, and sometimes miles of roads that have been washed out and not yet replaced.



Outside the main cities you must search for good hotels and, especially, for restaurants whose food doesn't nail you to your chair with indigestion.

In the words of the historian Timothy Garton Ash, Germany is "a nation in its perennial condition of becoming." From a traveler's perspective, it is all the more fascinating for that; the joy of a trip like ours was its blend of today's problems and achievements with the treasures of yesterday and the day before.

As the seat of the Saxon court, Dresden accumulated its artistic treasures in much the same way that Berlin, home of the Prussian rulers, and Mu-

uncle, Antonio Canal). Other rooms hold the world's best collection of Meissen, the first European porcelain successfully to imitate that of China.

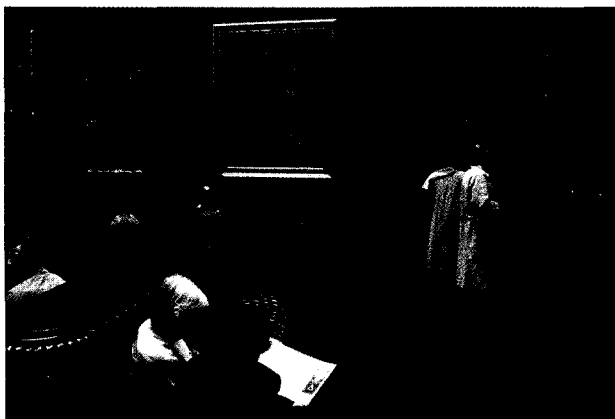
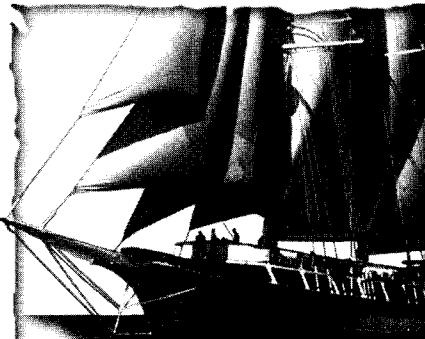
The Albertinum is another great museum, a fifteen-minute stroll away, down by the Elbe; you can get there by way of the Brühlsche Terrasse, overlooking the river. Four rooms of the Albertinum's Green Vault are crammed with bibelots created by goldsmiths, silversmiths, and jewelers from Dresden and elsewhere, mostly in the eighteenth century. Worked in pearls, rubies, emeralds, diamonds, rock crystal, enamel, tortoiseshell, gold, platinum, and silver in unimaginable quantities, they bear witness to the era's taste for wretched excess. Yet the best of them, such as the Court of the Great Mogul, a minute evocation of an Indian birthday party, transform what might be a mere curiosity into art. The 137 golden figures of this piece took the Dinglinger brothers of Dresden, the Cellinis of their day,

nich, where the Bavarian princes lived, built their fine collections. The Zwinger, one of the greatest of all Baroque creations, was designed by Pöppelmann as a "pleasure ground" for the enjoyment of the royals, with six linked pavilions—one of them a carillon whose bells are made of Meissen porcelain—surrounding a vast esplanade dotted with pools and fountains. The architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner looked at it and exclaimed, "What exultation in these rocking curves, and yet what grace! It is joyful but never vulgar; vigorous, boisterous perhaps, but never crude." Outside, the buildings are adorned with gods and goddesses, nymphs, flora, and garlands; inside, the royal collections are displayed. The pride and joy of the Sempergalerie is Raphael's luminous *Sistine Madonna*, but there are also masterworks by Van Eyck, Vermeer, and Veronese, plus views of Dresden as it looked in the eighteenth century, painted by the Italian Bernardo Bellotto (who rather confusingly used the same pseudonym, Canaletto, as his more famous

seven years to make. Older pieces, including Luther's ring and Ivan the Terrible's drinking bowl, are also on view.

Even if you can't get a ticket for the opera, you should take one of the tours of Gottfried and Manfred Semper's wonderful, ennobling theater. We saw it in the company of a charming old man named Gerd Straumer, the chief of the house's guide service. He had stayed up all night brushing up on his English, a language he had not spoken, he said, since high school half a century ago. He did fine, and when I blushed as he recounted the details of the 1945 attack, he protested gently, "But Hitler started the war, not the Americans, and you are not Bomber Harris"—the British commander who sent the planes to Dresden. Twice burned and twice rebuilt, the opera seats 1,323 people in an elegant nineteenth-century ambiance of gold, burgundy, beige, and white. A 1.9-ton brass chandelier hangs in the center, inscribed with the names of Wagner, Gluck, Mozart, and Meyerbeer, among others. But much here is unobtrusively

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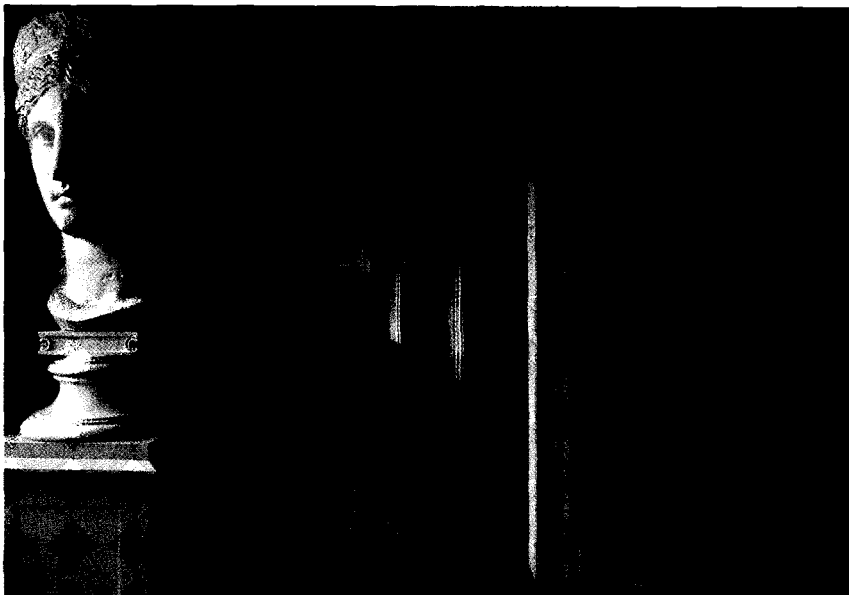
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Above, Goethe's house in Weimar. Below, a Weimar memorial to favorite sons Goethe and Schiller, and the Platz vor dem Rathaus in Erfurt

modern, too—wooden panels have been replaced by plaster replicas as a precaution against fire, and the stage is a technological marvel, with sixteen square platforms that can be raised, lowered, or tilted, plus a revolving circular platform in the rear, all controlled by the latest in electronic devices.

Dresden is a good walking town, and a few sorties from the center demonstrate the changes the city is going through. Old, soot-blackened buildings stand shoulder to shoulder with Communist-modern blobs and, on our visit, West German banks set up temporarily in prefabs. Across the river we found a neighborhood in transition. The Rähnitzgasse, in a pedestrian precinct, is lined with lavish Baroque townhouses. Some have been lovingly restored, such as No. 19, which is now the Bülow Residenz, a thirty-two-room hotel with an outstanding restaurant called the Caroussel, and No. 17, with a beautiful façade embellished with stucco cherubs and pineapples.

Dresden is also a terrific excursion center. One day we headed southeast along the Elbe to a promontory called the Bastei, which affords spectacular views over the cliffs and gorges of Saxon Switzerland, the region that lies between Dresden and the Czech border.

You can pick out the silhouette of Königstein, a castle so isolated on its pinnacle that it was used for centuries to house political prisoners. Pillnitz, another of Pöppelmann's triumphs, can be visited on the way back. In a burst of late-Baroque playfulness the architect combined Corinthian columns with pagoda-like roof lines and cupolas in this pleasure palace. It sounds awful but isn't. Another day we headed for Meis-

sen itself, twelve miles northwest of Dresden, a pretty old town hugging the left bank of the Elbe. The famous factory is open to visitors, you can have lunch at the sixteenth-century Weinstube Richter, and you might want to head home by way of the Moritzburg, a striking ocher-and-white chateau with massive round towers at the corners, surrounded by an artificial lake.

As we drove out of Dresden for a week-long loop through the heartland, we passed the spot in the suburbs where in 1980 poor Dresdeners, out scavenging with gunnysacks for lumps of coal that had fallen from the backs of trucks, had shaken their fists at our big capitalist car. Now the spot is marked by a billboard advertising American cigarettes, and BMWs and Volkswagens sped by as we pulled over. No matter how much they may grumble, the Ossies—East Germans—have grabbed the brass ring; alone among the people of the former satellite states, they had an automatic link not only to prosperous cousins in West Germany but through them to the European Union.

Our first stop was Weimar, in Thuringia. To foreigners, the town's name

recalls the ill-fated government based there, which flourished briefly between the wars and then succumbed to hyperinflation. But to Germans, this pretty town is a cultural and spiritual capital. Goethe wrote *Faust* there and for twenty-six years directed the renowned National Theater, and his friend Schiller moved to Weimar in 1799. Their houses, restored, are open to the public. Both Bach and Liszt served as choirmasters at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, which can boast as well of the great Crucifixion triptych, the last masterpiece of Lu-



cas Cranach the Elder. In the town museum there are more works by this great contemporary of Dürer's. But Weimar is pre-eminently a town for strolling. Visit the market square, where stands overflowing with fruits and vegetables jostle with bratwurst carts and flower vendors; wander down back streets, overhung by red-tile roofs; stop for a quick lunch at Zum Zwiebel, a homey little pub tucked into a corner near the church, with strings of onions hanging everywhere; explore the Schillerstrasse, a pedestrian street that leads through the center of this most pleasant of the region's towns. Here and throughout Germany you will find English widely spoken.

Not far west of Weimar is another picturesque old town, Erfurt, a photographer's delight; it is the center of the eastern German horticultural trade and in spring and summer looks every inch of it. Erfurt is worth visiting if only to see the Renaissance Krämerbrücke, lined with half-timbered houses and antique shops, and to indulge yourself at San Remo, which must be the best ice-cream parlor north of the Alps. Another forty-five minutes' drive to the west lies Eisenach and its great castle, the Wartburg, set on a crag to the south. History's hand wrote large here. Bach was born in Eisenach; Luther hid from a hostile Pope in the Wartburg, translating the Bible from Greek into German and paving the way for the Reformation; and Walther von der Vogelweide, Germany's most famous minstrel, won a celebrated song contest in the castle in 1207, immortalized in Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. The castle can be seen only on guided tours; it's more than worth it, even if you don't speak German.

My pleasure in the Wartburg was extinguished by a bleak early-morning visit to Buchenwald, hidden amid the tranquil beeches of the Ettersberg north of Weimar. Here 65,000 men, women, and children from thirty-five countries met their deaths, and 200,000 others suffered. I went because I felt compelled to. The prisoners' barracks have disappeared, only the outlines of their foundations remaining. The gatehouse bears the slogan "*Jedem das Seine*" ("To Each His Own"), and the watchtowers, searchlights, and crematorium ovens are equally chilling. It embarrasses me to admit it, but the rest of Buchenwald reminded me of nothing so much as a sturdy summer

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camp, and I left thinking how right Hannah Arendt had been to write of the banality of this monstrous evil.

LEAVING Weimar, we drove north through the Harz Mountains (the birdseed people added a *t* to the name) to the little town of Quedlinburg, which has enjoyed two brief bursts of celebrity in an otherwise obscure history. In the tenth century an abbey was founded there by Otto I, the Germanic King who took up the job of empire-building where Charlemagne left off. His time and that of his successors were an epoch of artistic brilliance, as attested by both the austere magnificent Romanesque church of St. Servatius and the exquisite medieval objects in its treasury. The jewel-encrusted twelfth-century Samuhel Gospel cover, a seventh-century ivory comb, a tenth-century reliquary box, and other glorious pieces dwelt in Quedlinburg for hundreds of years, with the exception of a brief hiatus during the Napoleonic era.

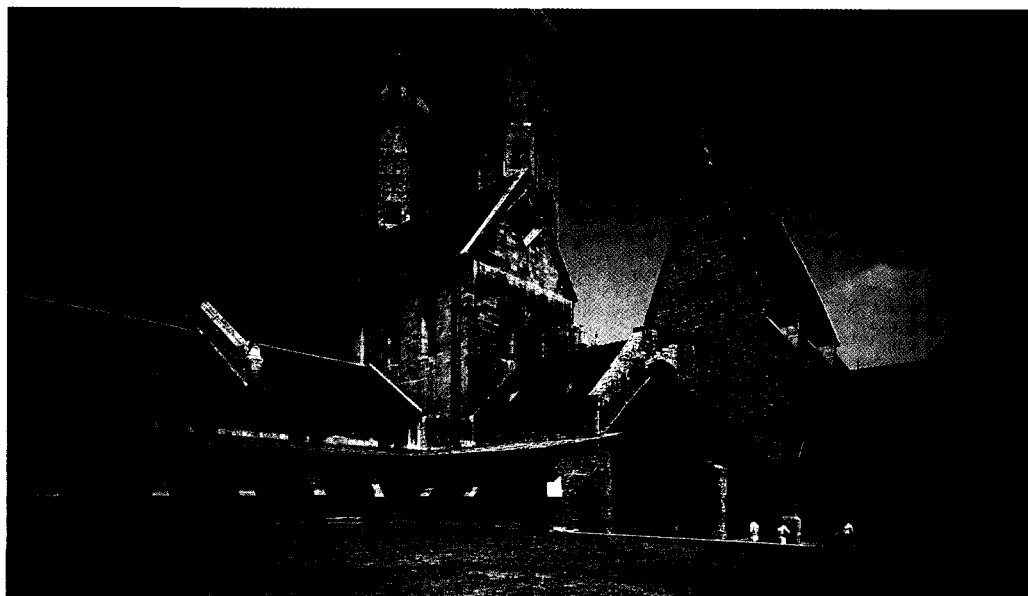
But in May of 1945, when other treasures were returned to the cathedral from wartime storage in nearby caves, the best were found to be missing. Not for almost fifty years did anyone learn that they had been stolen by a young American lieutenant, Joe T. Meador, of Whitewright, Texas. After he died, in 1980, his family tried to sell them, setting off an international rumpus that ended, happily, in the objects' triumphant return to St. Servatius. Viewing them in their ancient ecclesiastical setting, I found it almost impossible to imagine them secreted in some small-town Texas bank vault.

We also stopped that fine summer day in Naumburg, whose insufficiently celebrated cathedral combines Romanesque and Gothic elements. The sculptures of the church's benefactors, carved in the west choir by an unknown master, mark the summit of the stone carver's art in medieval Germany. Their original polychrome decoration is intact. The individualism of the faces, the serene seriousness of

their expressions, the tactile magnificence of their garments, is quite unforgettable. The portrait of Uta, the lovely wife of Margrave Ekkehard II, still haunts me.

Then Wittenberg. Martin Luther, professor of moral philosophy there, set in motion in 1517 one of the mightiest movements in humanity's spiritual history by nailing to the doors of the palace church his ninety-five theses condemning the abuses of the Catholic Church. Luther's tomb and that of his lieutenant, Melanchthon, are inside the church, and fine statues of the two stand in the marketplace. But the doors themselves were destroyed by French gunners in 1760, and the bronze replacements, on which the theses were duly inscribed, date from 1858.

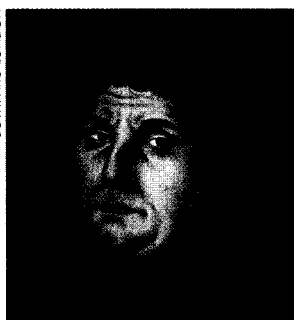
That isn't the only letdown in Wittenberg, which, as the son of two graduates of Wittenberg University in Ohio, I had long dreamed of visiting. Though the town is well preserved and its Rathaus splendid, there is something sad about Wittenberg, as if no one cared much about it. The spirit of Goethe lives in Weimar, that of Bach in Leipzig, but Luther, such a brooding presence in my childhood catechism, seemed curiously absent from Wittenberg's forlorn, almost flowerless streets.



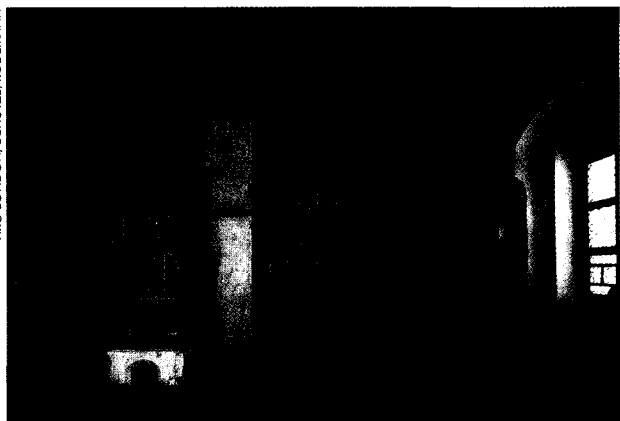
AKG LONDON/SCHÜTZE/RODEMANN

Above, Naumburg's cathedral. Below, Luther and Melanchthon by Cranach the Elder, and the Lutherhalle Museum, all in Wittenberg

BOTH: AKG LONDON



AKG LONDON/SCHÜTZE/RODEMANN



Why some of the biggest manufacturers refuse to make shirts for us.

Sure, they want the business. But not when they hear how *finicky* we are about everything that goes into a Lands' End Buttondown.

From the fit and the fabric, to the stitching of the buttonholes.

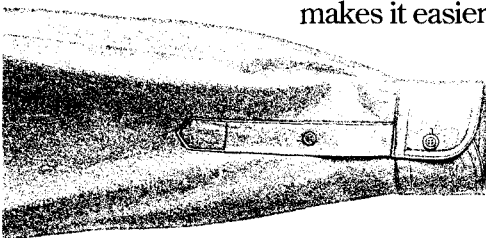
Before you buy *anybody's* buttondown, just consider what goes into ours:

A classic fit. Some companies go overboard; they cut off-the-shoulder, with big, blousey armholes. When you put a jacket on, the fabric bunches up.

Our shoulders are a *little* more relaxed than years gone by. But the cut is still traditional.

So there's no bunching up – and you look better.

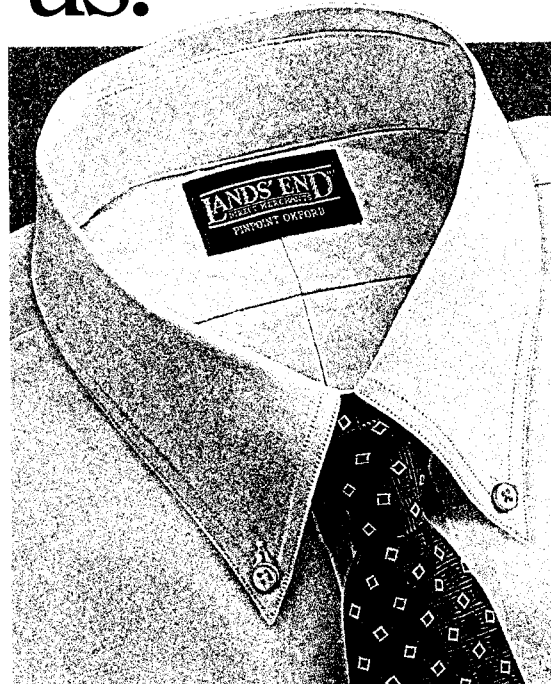
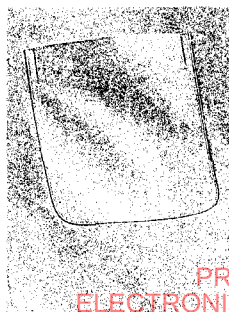
A longer sleeve placket. Tip to cuff, ours is 6 ³/₄" – an inch (or more) longer than others. This makes it easier



to lay out the sleeve for ironing, adds to your comfort. Note the extra button: an Old World touch.

Longer shirttails, which stay tucked in. Some shirtmakers abbreviate their tails to save on fabric. Ours are longer by 1" or more.

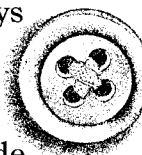
A deep chest pocket. Holds eyeglasses or pens securely, so they won't fall out.



A supple, natural roll collar. Some shirtmakers line collars with a cheap polyester. In washing, it reacts differently than cotton, producing crinkles.

Our collars have a natural lining we discovered. It shrinks just like cotton: your collar stays neater.

Buttons that defy even a commercial laundry. Our new buttons are made of the same tough resin used in bowling balls and boat hulls.



Grommets behind collar buttons. Soft pads inside the shirt to keep the buttons from ripping through. Most manufacturers omit grommets – buttons must fend for themselves.

Each buttonhole has 120 lock stitches. Most shirtmakers use fewer stitches – 90 to 100 stitches per buttonhole. Ours hold up better: you have to *work* to fray one.

Strong, single-needle stitching on shoulder and armhole seams. The seams lie flat, feel smooth. (Many manufacturers can't *do* single-needle work.)

Know what? We've run out of space, and still haven't covered everything.

We've only found two manufacturers who can build shirts our way. But when you put on our

Buttondown – and see how you look – you'll agree that being picky-picky has paid off.

Fact is, you can pay two or three times as much, and still not get *all* our features.

Why not call for our catalog? Where we can *really* tell you about our shirts....

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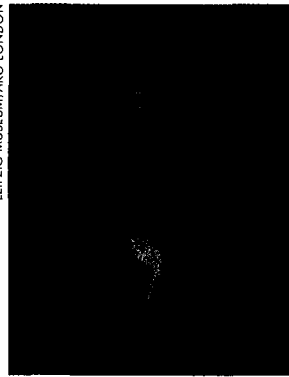
WE left Leipzig for last. During the long Communist nightmare this city of half a million, which was East Germany's biggest after Berlin, remained more open to the West than others, thanks mainly to its trade fairs, which date back to the twelfth century, and its dozens of book publishers. Leipzig was instrumental in the overthrow of the old regime, with Kurt Masur, then the conductor of the city's Gewandhaus Orchestra and now the music director of the New York Philharmonic, playing a prominent political role. The modern opera house and concert hall come up short on charm if long on acoustics, and much of the rest of the town is ugly, but the Altstadt, or old city, has a few well-restored buildings (the old Rathaus, 1556; the old

Above, Bach as he appears in the Leipzig Museum, and St. Thomas's Church as it was in Bach's day.
Below, Leipzig's Mdler Passage

produce exchange, 1687; the Romanus house, 1704). For me, this is above all Bach's city. If you can, visit the oft-restored St. Thomas's Church for vespers on Sunday, when the Thomachor, which Bach led for twenty-seven years, sings his cantatas and motets. Bach's tomb in the church is marked with a plain three-foot-by-six-foot slab bearing only his name. Across the street stands a period house, now a small but excellent Bach museum.

The Fine Arts Museum may not be the Zwinger, and the exterior looks as if someone dumped a sack of coal dust over it, but we were excited by the pictures and the quality of their installation—a fine Van der Weyden Visitation,

LEIPZIG MUSEUM/AGG LONDON



AGG LONDON

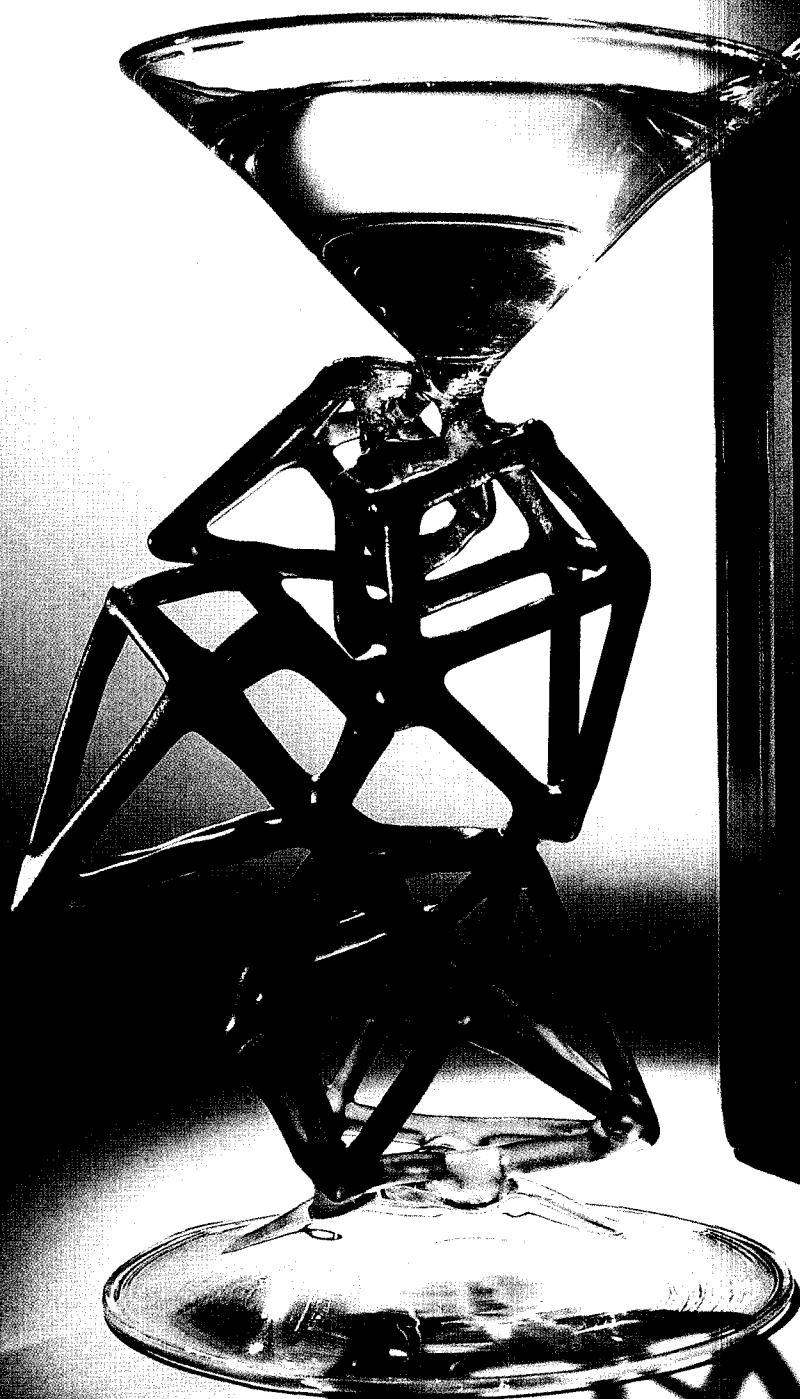
a great Hals, a greater Drer of a girl with braids, a Beckmann portrait of a merchant. In the last gallery note is taken of the 394 works confiscated in 1937 by the Nazis, in their campaign against "degenerate art," with photographs of the paintings and a sad acknowledgment that most have been lost.

Mostly we wandered, the way one does in big cities, picking out remnants of the recent past, such as broken neon signs touting Bulgarian wines, amid reminders of a more sedate time, including the coffeehouse Zum Kaffeebaum, at Kleine Fleischergasse 4, with a Turk depicted over the doorway offering coffee to a cherub. The Mdler Passage, Leipzig's showplace, is an animated T-shaped arcade. Off it open the Auerbachs Keller, a restaurant mentioned by Goethe in *Faust*, and all sorts of smart, tempting shops, including the doll dealer Die Puppengalerie (at No. 21) and, just outside, at Neumarkt 16, Schulze's Delikatessen. Slowly renovation is gaining the upper hand over dilapidation, and the posters displayed at every street corner—"Leipzig Kommt!" ("Leipzig Is Coming!")—seem well within the bounds of acceptable civic boosterism.

Sipping a last drink on our last night, at the Inter-continental Hotel, we met a young bartender (what else?) who seemed to us to grasp the new East as well as anyone we had talked to. "I'm a West Berliner," he said. "I came here because this is where the opportunities are going to open up. I belong here now. You can only tell me from my Ossie friends by our accents, not by our clothes or what we do or what we want out of life. With the older ones, it's different. They carry East Germany around in their heads, and they will never really get rid of it." ☼

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WHAT CAN A CLASSROOM OF STUDENTS LEARN FROM LISTENING TO A DOVE?

Plenty if it's Dr. Hood Frazier's Poetry class, and the "Dove" in question just happens to be Rita Dove, the Poet Laureate of the United States. Dr. Frazier's students studied Mrs. Dove's poetry and, after learning sophisticated camera equipment, conducted an interview with her on tape. Later, they presented the results to the class.

That was one of the many collaborative projects the students created with Dr. Frazier's help. Other projects included organizing poetry readings at local galleries and bookstores, creating a poetry writing workshop for elementary school students, and publishing a collection of poems from other high schools in the area.

Dr. Frazier believes the students "began to see themselves as writers and productive members of the community."

We couldn't agree more. And we're pleased to present Dr. Frazier with the State Farm Good Neighbor Award and to donate in his name \$4,000 to Murray High School in Charlottesville, Virginia, and \$1,000 to the Crossroads Waldorf School in Crozet, Virginia.



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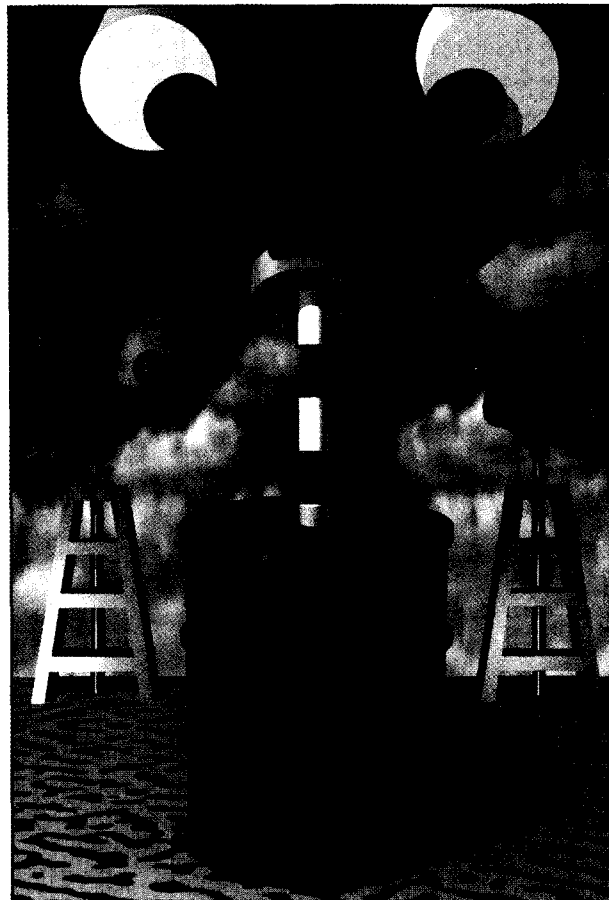
Mideast Oil Forever?

by JOSEPH J. ROMM AND CHARLES B. CURTIS

*Congressional
budget-cutters threaten
to end America's leadership in
new energy technologies that could
generate hundreds of thousands
of high-wage jobs, reduce damage to the
environment, and limit our costly,
dangerous dependency on oil from the
unstable Persian Gulf region*

I M A G I N E a world in which the Persian Gulf controlled two thirds of the world's oil for export, with \$200 billion a year in oil revenues streaming into that unstable and politically troubled region, and America was importing nearly 60 percent of its oil, resulting in a \$100-billion-a-year outflow that undermined efforts to reduce our trade deficit. That's a scenario out of the 1970s which can never happen again, right? No, that's the "reference case" projection for ten years from now from the federal Energy Information Administration.

Imagine another world in which fossil-fuel use had begun a slow, steady decline; more than a third of the market for new electricity generation was supplied from renewable sources; the renewables industry had annual sales of \$150 billion; and the fastest-growing new source of power was solar energy. An environmentalist's fantasy, right? No, that's one of two planning scenarios for three to four decades from now, developed by



Royal Dutch/Shell Group, the world's most profitable oil company, which is widely viewed as a bench mark for strategic planning.

A decade's worth of little-heralded technological advances funded by the Department of Energy have helped to bring such a renewables revolution within our grasp. Yet budget cuts already proposed by Congress would ensure that when renewable energy becomes a source of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of new high-wage jobs in the next century, America will have lost its leadership in the relevant technologies and will once again be importing products originally developed by U.S.

scientists. Moreover, Congress's present and planned cuts in advanced transportation and fossil-fuel research and development impede efforts to maximize the nation's conventional-energy resource base.

Although little can be done to change the first scenario, Congress's actions all but guarantee that if an oil crisis comes,

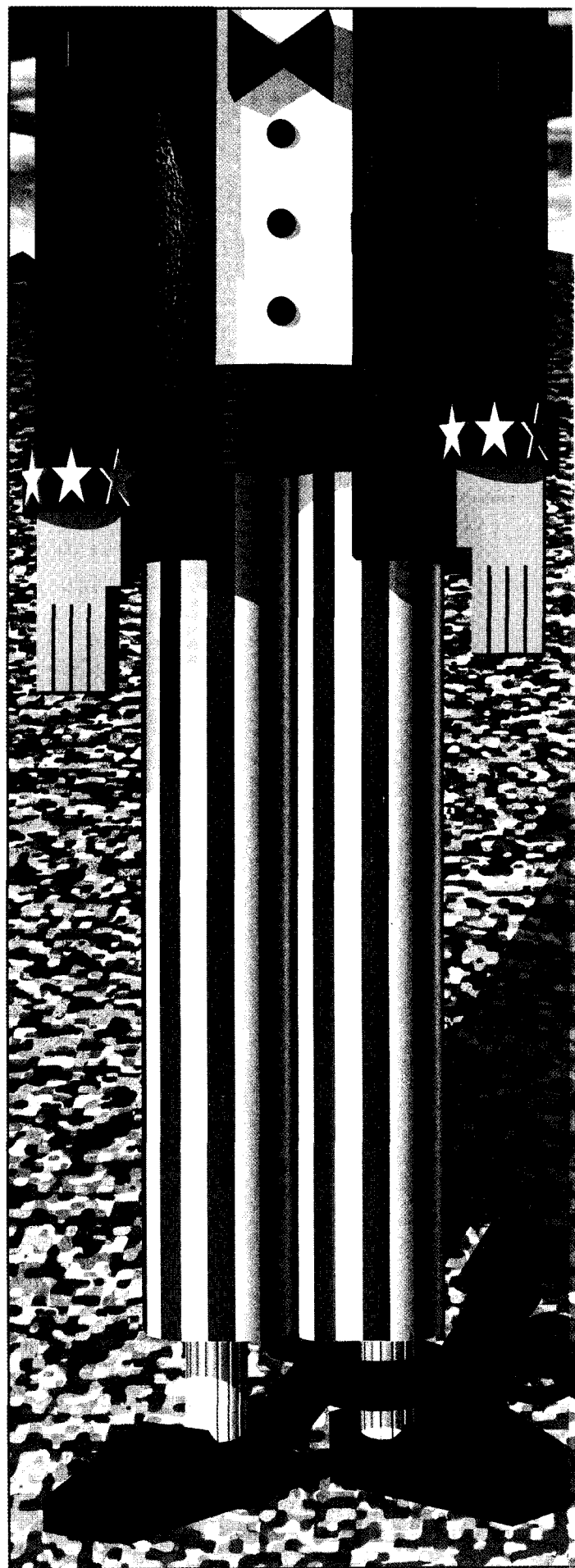
our national response will be reactive, uninformed, and unduly burdensome. Having abandoned the technological means to minimize the crisis, the nation will be left in the next century with little more than its usual responses to energy crises: price controls or other rigid regulations, or unplanned, ineffective attempts to deal with the effects of sharp price or supply fluctuations.

What's more, cuts in research on clean-energy technologies represent a statement by Congress—conscious on the part of some members, unintentional on the part of others—that global climate change is of little or no concern, and that domestic environmental problems, such as urban air quality and industrial waste, require nothing more than existing strategies. Yet the nation's "tools" for dealing with pollution are similar to those for dealing with an oil crisis, and new technology usually provides the most cost-effective solution. One example: A relatively small amount of money spent today to develop, test, and deploy highly reflective roofing and road material and plant shade trees could help cool the Los Angeles area by five degrees, reducing annual air-conditioning bills by more than \$150 million. Since smog formation is very temperature-sensitive, such cooling would reduce smog concentrations by 10 percent, which would be comparable to removing three quarters of the cars on the road. The health-related benefits of that smog reduction would be worth \$300 million a year. Applied nationally, the energy savings alone could exceed \$10 billion a year by 2015.

Although news coverage of the environment has focused on congressional efforts to roll back environmental regulations, cuts in environmental-technology programs will have as significant an impact on our quality of life in the long run. And by turning a blind eye to the technological solutions to environmental problems, we limit ourselves to far-more-onerous alternatives. The environmental regulations that Congress is rolling back today may become all the more necessary in the not too distant future.

The programs being cut are not those failures of the past that are often mentioned by critics of federal energy research—for example, the synfuels program of a decade and a half ago. They are instead programs that have been delivering results for years. A report released last June by a blue-ribbon panel of independent energy analysts, led by the energy expert Daniel Yergin, the Pulitzer-winning author of *The Prize*, cited dozens of federally funded technological advances that "are generating billions of dollars worth of annual consumer energy savings and new business opportunities, and playing an important role in job creation." This is what will be lost.

Government and the people it represents cannot expect that the best-case scenario will play out. Rather, government should in behalf of the people try to prevent plausible worst-case scenarios or take advantage of likely trends and opportunities through long-term investments that the private sector will not make (either because they are too risky or because





the reward is too far off). Both of us work for the Department of Energy, and in this article we examine some likely scenarios concerning petroleum, power generation, and pollution to help focus attention on a quiet revolution in energy markets and energy technologies which will have a profound impact on U.S. economic strength, environmental health, and national security in the next century. The impact will probably equal that of the much-ballyhooed information revolution, which receives far more attention from policymakers and the media. Yet if we don't focus on energy today, our quality of life tomorrow will be permanently diminished.

The Coming Oil Crisis

GIVEN that the most recent war America fought was in the Persian Gulf, let's start by examining the likelihood that an oil crisis will occur in the coming decade. Forecasting is always risky, especially where oil is concerned, but consider what a variety of experienced energy hands from every point on the political spectrum have said in the past year alone. Donald Hodel, who was a Secretary of Energy under Ronald Reagan, has said that we are "sleepwalking into a disaster," and predicts a major oil crisis within a few years. Irwin Stelzer, of the American Enterprise Institute, says that the next oil shock "will make those of the 1970s seem trivial by comparison." Daniel Yergin says, "People seem to have forgotten that oil prices, like those of all commodities, are cyclical and will go up again." James Schlesinger, who was the Secretary of Energy under Jimmy Carter, has said, "By the end of this decade we are likely to see substantial price increases." In March of last year Robert Dole, the Senate majority leader, said in a speech at the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom, "The second inescapable reality of the post-twentieth-century world is that the security of the world's oil and gas supplies will remain a vital national interest of the United States and of the other industrial powers. The Persian Gulf . . . is still a region of many uncertainties. . . . In this 'new energy order' many of the most important geopolitical decisions—ones on which a nation's sovereignty can depend—will deal with the location and routes for oil and gas pipelines. In response, our strategy, our diplomacy, and our forward military presence need readjusting." The chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, not known for being an alarmist, in testimony before Congress last July raised concerns that a rising trade deficit in oil "tends to create questions about the security of our oil resources."

Concerns about a coming oil crisis have surfaced in the financial markets as well. Last October, in an article titled "Your Last Big Play in Oil," *Fortune* magazine listed several billionaires and "big mutual fund managers" who were betting heavily that oil prices would rise significantly. The magazine went on to suggest an investment portfolio of "companies that are best positioned to profit from the coming boom."

Fundamental trends in oil demand and supply underlie this emerging consensus. First, the world will probably need another 20 million barrels of oil a day by the year 2010, according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA). The International Energy Agency projects an even greater growth in demand, following the inexorable tide of population growth, urbanization, and industrialization.

Second, the world's population is expected to increase by 50 percent by 2020, with more than half those additional people born in Asia and Latin America. And as farm workers move to the city, much more energy and oil will be needed. The fundamentals of urbanization—commuting, transporting raw materials, constructing infrastructure, powering commercial buildings—all consume large amounts of oil and electricity. At the same time, fewer farms will have to feed more people, and so the use of mechanization, transportation, and fertilizer will increase, entailing the consumption of still more energy and oil. An analysis by one of the Department of Energy's national laboratories found that a doubling of the proportion of China's and India's populations that lives in cities could increase per capita energy consumption by 45 percent—even if industrialization and income per capita remained unchanged.

Finally, industrialization has an even greater impact on energy use. As countries develop industries, they use more energy per unit of gross national product and per worker. Crucial industries for development are also the most energy-intensive: primary metals; stone, clay, and glass; pulp and paper; petroleum refining; and chemicals. In the United States these industries account for more than 80 percent of manufacturing energy consumption (and more than 80 percent of industrial waste).

As *Fortune* has noted, if the per capita energy consumption of China and India rises to that of South Korea, and the Chinese and Indian populations increase at currently projected rates, "these two countries alone will need a total of 119 million barrels of oil a day. That's almost double the world's entire demand today."

Barring a major and long-lasting worldwide economic depression, global energy demand will be rising inexorably for the foreseeable future. The Persian Gulf, with two thirds of the world's oil reserves, is expected to supply the vast majority of that increased demand—as much as 80 percent, according to the EIA. Within ten to fifteen years the Persian Gulf's share of the world export market may surpass its highest level to date, 67 percent, which was attained in 1974. The EIA predicts that in the face of increased demand, oil prices will rise slowly to \$24 a barrel (1994 dollars) in 2010. If, instead, they remain low, the Gulf's share of the world export market may rise as high as 75 percent in 2010.

Although non-OPEC nations did increase production by almost 15 percent from 1980 to 1990, they increased proven reserves of oil by only 10 percent. The net result is that the

remaining years of production for non-OPEC reserves has actually fallen from eighteen years to seventeen years. On the other hand, while OPEC increased production by 20 percent in the 1980s, it increased its proven reserves by 75 percent. As a result, OPEC's reserves-to-production ratio doubled to ninety years.

The growing dependence on imported oil in general and Persian Gulf oil in particular has several potentially serious implications for the nation's economic and national security. First, the United States is expected to be importing nearly 60 percent of its oil by ten years from now, with roughly a third of that oil coming from the Persian Gulf. Our trade deficit in oil is expected to double, to \$100 billion a year, by that time—a large and continual drag on our economic health. To the extent that the Gulf's recapture of the dominant share of the global oil market will make price increases more likely, the U.S. economy is at risk. Although oil imports as a percent of gross domestic product have decreased significantly in the past decade, our economic vulnerability to rapid increases in the price of oil persists. Since 1970 sharp increases in the price of oil have always been followed by economic recessions in the United States.

Second, the Persian Gulf nations' oil revenues are likely to almost triple, from \$90 billion a year today to \$250 billion a year in 2010—a huge geopolitical power shift of great concern, especially since some analysts predict increasing internal and regional pressure on Saudi Arabia to alter its pro-Western stance. This represents a \$1.5 trillion increase in wealth for Persian Gulf producers over the next decade and a half. That money could buy a tremendous amount of weaponry, influence, and mischief in a chronically unstable region. And the breakup of the Soviet Union, coupled with Russia's difficulty in earning hard currency, means that for the next decade and beyond, pressure will build to make Russia's most advanced military hardware and technical expertise available to well-heeled buyers.

The final piece in the geopolitical puzzle is that during the oil crisis of the 1970s the countries competing with us for oil were our NATO allies, but during the next oil crisis a new, important complication will arise: the competition for oil will increasingly come from the rapidly growing countries of Asia. Indeed, in the early 1970s East Asia consumed well under half as much oil as the United States, but by the time of the next crisis East Asian nations will probably be consuming more oil than we do.

Abandoning the Solution

WHAT is the appropriate national response to the re-emerging energy-security threat? Abroad the Department of Energy has been working hard to expand sources of oil outside the Persian Gulf region—in the former Soviet Union, for example—and to encourage the



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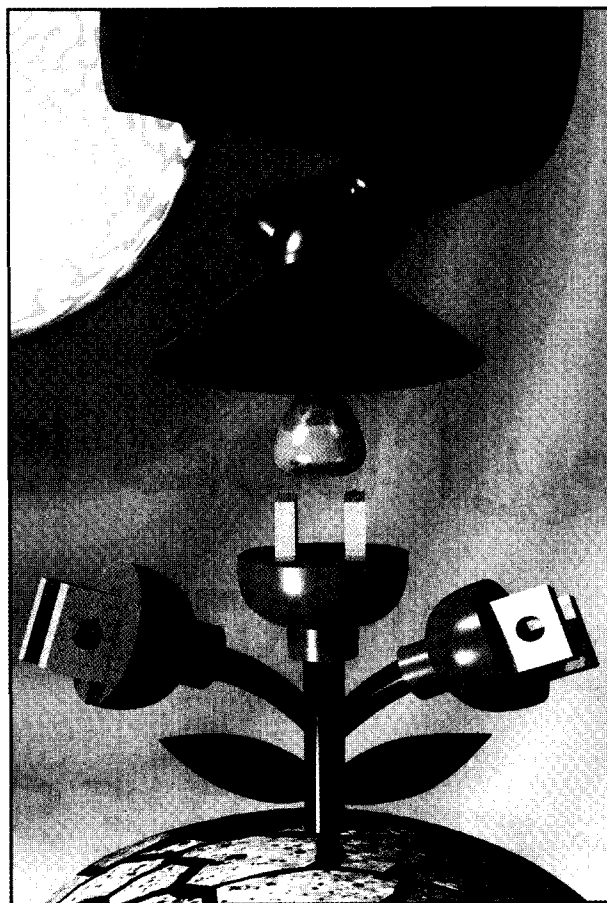
privatization of the oil companies in Mexico and other Latin American countries.

At home the DOE is encouraging greater production by providing royalty relief in the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico and similar incentives, so that the industry can drill wells that otherwise would not be cost-effective. The DOE is working to reduce the cost for the industry to comply with federal regulations. Finally, the department is spending tens of millions of dollars a year to develop new technologies that will lower the cost of finding and extracting oil—for example, using advanced computing to model oil fields. Still, few expect to reverse the decade-long decline in U.S. oil production. Some

would open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling, a plan the Clinton Administration has opposed on environmental grounds, but not even that would change our forecasted oil dependency much. This is true even using earlier, more optimistic estimates that the refuge could provide 300,000 barrels of oil a day for thirty years. The EIA projects that within ten to fifteen years the United States will probably be importing *thirty times as much*—some 10 million barrels of crude oil a day, even if the decline in other domestic production levels off in the next few years.

Increasing domestic supply, although it may help to slow the rising tide of imports, cannot itself reverse the major trend. And reversing the nation's ever-increasing demand for oil would be difficult. The country is in no mood to enact higher energy taxes in order to bring our energy markets into better balance. To most people, an increase in gasoline taxes of even a few cents a gallon—let alone the amount needed to have a noticeable impact on consumption—is anathema. Similarly, Congress is in no mood for a regulatory approach, such as mandating increased fuel efficiency for cars.

That leaves one solution for reducing consumption: the



technological approach, which draws on America's traditional leadership in research and development. Here tremendous progress has been made. Given the uncertain nature of long-term, high-risk R&D in leapfrog technologies, the prudent approach is to explore a number of possibilities. The DOE has invested in the development of cars and trucks that are highly fuel-efficient, along with cars that run on electricity, on liquid biofuels from crops, crop waste, and municipal solid waste, or on natural gas.

Consider biofuels. In 1994 research sponsored by the DOE created a genetically engineered organism that enhances the fermentation of

cellulose, increasing the rate of conversion and the yield of ethanol. This achievement, described in the journal *Science*, was named one of the hundred most significant technological advances of the year by *R&D* magazine. This and other federally supported research has brought the cost of making ethanol from \$3.60 a gallon fifteen years ago to about \$1.00 a gallon today. If biofuels R&D were funded at current levels for five to ten years, ethanol from fast-growing dedicated crops, crop waste, and wastepaper could be produced for as little as sixty to seventy cents a gallon by 2005. In a country with excess cropland, such as the United States, the potential for biofuels is enormous. Rather than paying some farmers not to grow anything, we might in the future pay the same farmers to grow dedicated bioenergy crops. In a country

where cropland is scarce, such as China, bioenergy could come from municipal and agricultural wastes.

Technologies are also being developed to make possible a superefficient hybrid vehicle that has both an internal-combustion engine and some kind of energy-storage device, such as a battery or a flywheel. A very advanced hybrid has been described by Amory

5 he programs being cut are not those failures of the past that are often mentioned by critics of federal energy research. They are instead programs that have been delivering results for years.

B. Lovins and L. Hunter Lovins (see "Reinventing the Wheels," January, 1995, *Atlantic*). Supporting technologies include lightweight, superstrong materials and advanced engines, among other things. This research has been undertaken by the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles, a collaboration among several federal agencies, the DOE's national laboratories, and the auto industry. The goal of the partnership is to design and construct by 2004 a prototype clean car that has three times the fuel efficiency of existing cars and very low emissions, and also comparable or improved performance, safety, and cost. Such a car would allow domestically produced advanced technologies to replace oil imports.

Another direction that research is taking is toward advanced batteries for use in electric cars—among them the nickel metal-hydride battery—which promise to double the range achievable with existing lead-acid batteries. In conjunction with advances in clean power generation, described below, these batteries hold the prospect of replacing imported oil with domestically produced electricity.

The technology that most experts would agree has the best chance over the long term of replacing petroleum use in the transportation sector is fuel cells. These are compact modular devices that generate electricity and heat with high efficiency and virtually no pollution. They run on hydrogen converted from natural gas and other fuels. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration developed early versions of fuel cells for use on space missions. Over the past two decades the DOE has spent tens of millions of dollars on several types of fuel cells that will soon be used to power cars, trucks, utilities, commercial buildings, and industries. The Japanese government has been increasing its fuel-cell budget by an average of 20 percent a year for the past five years, and Japanese companies are less than five years behind U.S. companies in this technology. The Europeans are considering significantly increasing their fuel-cell funding. Sustained federal support might well give America the lion's share of a multibillion-dollar global market.

Fuel cells are one of many advances that may increase the use of natural gas as a transportation fuel over the long term. Since 1992 the DOE has significantly increased its budget for research and development related to enhancing the supply and the efficient use of natural gas. It is seeking to encourage a wider use of natural-gas vehicles, to establish a nationwide infrastructure for fueling those vehicles, and to develop gas-turbine engines for light-duty vehicles.

Current DOE programs—unlike those of the late 1970s, which required oil to cost \$80 a barrel if they were to be competitive—are aimed at making alternatives competitive even if oil prices decline. The likely outcome of all the programs mentioned above should not be overstated: we will not achieve energy independence in the next fifteen years. What this investment portfolio does offer is a chance in the years thereafter to blunt any foreign threat to raise oil prices

dramatically and to limit the economic and geopolitical impact of Persian Gulf oil in particular. At the same time, domestic jobs will be created if money that might have gone overseas to buy foreign oil goes instead to manufacturing superefficient cars and trucks or domestic biofuels.

What's more, the rapid population growth and urbanization of developing nations, coupled with the harsh pollution that characterizes most major urban centers in those nations, ensure a tremendous market for low-emission, superefficient automotive technology. Our industrialized competitors have one inherent advantage in the race to develop the supercar: gas prices of \$3.00 or \$4.00 a gallon. Fuel efficiency matters more in their economies, and vehicles that use alternative fuels will be cost-competitive in their markets sooner. The primary counterbalance to that advantage is U.S. technological leadership in most relevant areas, stemming in part from historically higher levels of R&D spending.

That counterbalance is about to disappear. Congress has cut the proposed fiscal year 1996 allocations for the DOE's advanced-transportation-technology budget by 30 percent. Moreover, the multi-year balanced-budget plan approved by the House and Senate would cut the budget for such technology by 60–80 percent in real terms.

The fact that the DOE has been collaborating with the auto industry in the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles gives some in Congress a thin excuse to label the partnership's programs "corporate welfare." Yet Detroit's car makers agreed to match federal spending while coordinating their corporate research with the DOE's national laboratories in order to address the pressing national problems of oil imports and urban air quality. The last time America ignored the warning signs of growing dependence on imported oil, the Japanese were able to seize a significant share of the U.S. auto market with fuel-efficient cars.

Congress's own Office of Technology Assessment released a report last September acknowledging that the DOE's "strategy of pursuing several different [vehicle] technology options is advantageous for a variety of reasons." Congress is ignoring the advice of the office it set up, staffed, and funded to provide independent advice on technological issues of national importance. Indeed, it apparently no longer wants to hear any advice on such issues. Late last year Congress closed the Office of Technology Assessment for good.

That the nation's and the world's dependence on Persian Gulf oil will grow over the next decade seems inevitable. This is particularly true since most projections assume continuing significant technological progress in bringing down the cost of domestic production, in developing alternatives, and in using energy and oil more efficiently. But those projections have not factored in the federal government's plans to withdraw from its role in fostering the development and deployment of those technologies.

The Renewables Revolution

PREDICTING our energy future beyond 2010 is chancy, but here we have an opportunity to rely on perhaps the most successful predictor in the energy business: Royal Dutch/Shell Group. According to *The Economist*, "The only oil company to anticipate both 1973's oil-price boom and 1986's bust was Royal Dutch/Shell." Anticipating the oil shocks of the 1970s helped Shell to move from being the weakest of the seven largest oil companies in 1970 to being one of the two strongest only ten years later. Anticipating the oil bust was apparently even more lucrative. According to *Fortune's* ranking of the 500 largest corporations, Royal Dutch/Shell is now not only the most profitable oil company in the world but the most profitable corporation of any kind.

When such a company envisions a fundamental transition in power generation from fossil fuels to renewable energy beginning in two decades, a transition that will have a significant impact on every aspect of our lives, the prediction is worth examining in some detail. Chris Fay, the chairman and CEO of Shell UK Ltd., said in a speech in Scotland last year, "There is clearly a limit to fossil fuel. . . . Shell analysis suggests that resources and supplies are likely to peak around 2030 before declining slowly. . . . But what about the growing gap between demand and fossil fuel supplies? Some will obviously be filled by hydro-electric and nuclear power. Far more important will be the contribution of alternative renewable energy supplies."

Fay presented a detailed analysis of future trends in energy supply and demand, noting that the fossil-fuel peak in 2030 would occur at a usage level half again as high as today's. Shell's analysis does not rely exclusively on supply limits—after all, for decades people have been worried about such limits, and the supply has continued to expand—but also incorporates a recognition of the tremendous advances that have been made in renewable-energy technologies over the past two decades and that are expected to be made over the next two decades.

Although these advances in renewables have received very little media attention, they have persuaded Shell planners that renewables may make up a third of the supply of new electricity within three decades *even if electricity from fossil fuels continues to decline in cost*. An "Energy in Transition" scenario that they have prepared does not assume price increases in fossil fuels—also, as we have seen, a plausible hypothesis. Nor does Shell assume any attempt by governments to incorporate environmental costs into the price of energy, even though every single independent analysis has found that fossil-fuel generation has much higher environmental costs than non-fossil-fuel generation has. According to Shell's strategic-planning group, "The Energy in Transition future can claim to be a genuine 'Business as Usual' scenario, since its energy demand is a continuation of a long

historical trend, and the energy is supplied in a way which continues the pattern."

Indeed, in the past fifteen years the Department of Energy, working with the private sector, has reduced the costs of electricity from biomass (such as crops and crop waste) and wind, bringing them into the current range of wholesale costs for coal and other traditional sources of electricity: three to five cents per kilowatt-hour.

A quiet revolution has already brought the United States almost eight gigawatts of biomass electrical capacity. Gasifying biomass and using advanced turbines could bring biomass power to 4.5 cents per kilowatt-hour within a decade, according to the DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Shell projects that by 2010 commercial energy from biomass could provide five percent of the world's power; using Shell's projections, we estimate that the value of that power generation could exceed \$20 billion.

Over the past fifteen years electricity from wind power has declined in cost by 10 percent a year. The problems of the windmills that were rushed to market in the 1970s, such as noise and TV interference, have largely been solved. With the DOE's help the old wind-turbine blades, borrowed almost directly from aircraft-propeller design, have been replaced with sophisticated blades designed to capture wind energy efficiently over a broad range of wind speeds and direction. Utilities are already receiving long-term bids for electricity from wind at 4.5 cents per kilowatt-hour in the best wind sites in the country. With a continued public-private partnership in technology advancement, wind could hit three cents per kilowatt-hour by 2020, and soon after that wind-power plants' annual sales could reach \$50 billion.

Photovoltaic (PV) cells, which convert sunlight into electricity, now cost one tenth what they did in 1975. The DOE has invested heavily in new thin-film PV panels, which take advantage of U.S. expertise in semiconductor fabrication. Shell expects that PVs, along with fuel cells and small gas-fired power plants, will permit the growth of distributed-power systems. In developing nations distributed sources can obviate the need for huge power lines and other costly elements of an enormous electric-power grid (much as personal computers replace large mainframe computers). PV modules sold worldwide totaled less than four megawatts in 1980 and now exceed 80 megawatts a year; sales continue to grow. The Energy in Transition scenario predicts that photovoltaics and other direct conversions of sunlight will be the most rapidly growing form of commercial energy after 2030. Sales could quickly exceed \$100 billion. Shell itself has bought two photovoltaics companies.

This scenario, a highly credible one given Shell's reputation, is tantalizing, because it holds out the possibility that the world could within a few decades begin to realize the dream of nearly pollution-free energy. Consider also that the United States, which is now the leader in most areas of re-

newables technology, could simultaneously reduce its dependence on foreign energy supplies, reverse the trend toward an ever-increasing energy trade deficit, and capture a large share of what promises to be perhaps the largest new job-creating sector of the international economy.

This is only a scenario; our actions today can have an impact, either positive or negative. According to Chris Fay, of Shell, "New technologies cannot leap from laboratory to mass market overnight. They must first be tested in niche markets, where some succeed but many fail. Costs fall as they progress down the 'learning curve' with increasing application." The long-term nature of research, and the real potential for failure, are why many options must be pursued at once and why many private-sector companies have been reluctant to invest. Fay observes, "Renewables will have to progress very quickly if they are to supply a major proportion of the world's energy in the first half of the next century. . . .

They can only emerge through the process of widespread commercial experimentation and competitive optimization."

Federal investments clearly make a difference in technology development and global market share. Consider the case of photovoltaics. In 1955 Bell Laboratories invented the first practical PV cell. Through the 1960s and 1970s investments and purchases by NASA, the Pentagon, and the National Science Foundation helped to sustain the PV industry and gave America leadership in world sales. In 1982 federal support for renewable energy was cut deeply, and within three years Japan became the world leader in PV sales. The Bush Administration began to increase funding for solar energy and, in 1990, collaborated with the American PV industry in efforts to improve manufacturing technology; three years later the United States regained the lead in sales in this rapidly growing industry. The Clinton Administration has accelerated funding for PVs.

ON PICKINESS

When the first mechanical picker had stripped the field,
It left such a copious white dross of disorderly wispiness
That my mother could not resign herself to the waste
And insisted on having it picked over with human hands,

Though anyone could see there was not enough for ten sheets
And the hands had long since gone into the factories.
No matter how often my father pointed this out,
She worried it the way I've worried the extra words

In poems that I conceived with the approximate
Notion that each stanza should have the same number
Of lines and each line the same number of syllables—
And disregard it, telling myself a ripple

Or botch on the surface, like the stutter of a speaker,
Is all I have to affirm the deep fluency below.
The Hebrews distrusted Greek poetry (which embodied
Harmony and symmetry, and, therefore, revision)

Not for aesthetic reasons but because they believed
That to change the first words, which rose unsmelted
From the trance, amounted to sacrilege against God.
In countries where, because of the gross abundance

Of labor, it's unlawful to import harvesting machines,
I see the women in the fields and think of how,
When my mother used to pick, you could tell
Her row by the bare stalks and the scant poundage

That tumbled from her sack so pristinely white
And devoid of burrs, it seemed to have already
Passed through the spiked mandibles of the gin.
Dr. Williams said of Eliot that his poems seemed so

Cautiously wrought that they seemed to come
To us already digested in all four bellies of the cow.
What my father loved about my mother was not
Just the beauty of her body and face but the practice

Of her ideas and the intelligence of her hands
As they made the house that abides in us still
As worry and bother, but also as perfect freedom beyond—
As cleanliness is next to godliness but is not God.

—RODNEY JONES

Sadly, however, the cuts of the 1980s have taken their toll: in the past decade German and Japanese companies snapped up several major American PV companies, which accounted for 63 percent of the PVs manufactured in the United States. Such purchases represent huge savings for our foreign competitors. They don't have to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to determine which technologies succeed. They need only let the United States do the basic research, and then spend a few tens of millions of dollars plucking the winners when the federal government abandons funding for applied research.

Although many members of Congress argue that the cuts in federal R&D will be made up for by the private sector, historically this hasn't happened. When the government pulls out of an area of technology, it sends a signal to the industrial and financial communities that the area has no long-term promise and that the federal government is not a reliable partner. The situation is especially bad today, because recent studies make clear that private-sector R&D has been fairly flat since 1991, and because U.S. companies have been shifting away from basic and applied research toward incremental product and process improvement—a shift that has been exacerbated by increased international competition and the downsizing of corporate laboratories.

In addition, whereas the federal government only recently, and temporarily, increased funding for renewable energy, reversing the deep cuts of the 1980s, our foreign competitors have been steadily increasing such funding for a decade and a half. Whereas we once spent several times as much as the rest of the world combined, the rest of the world now significantly outspends us. Moreover, countries such as Germany, Japan, Denmark, and the Netherlands have far greater financial incentives for renewable energy. And their prices for electricity are typically much higher: in 1991 electricity cost Germany's industrial sector 8.8 cents per kilowatt-hour, whereas in the United States it cost 4.9 cents per kilowatt-hour. That means renewable energy will be cost-effective in foreign countries before it is in America.

The primary competitive advantage the United States has had in renewables is technological leadership driven by long-term federal spending prior to the early 1980s and then the spending in the early 1990s. Recently Congress cut renewable-energy funding by 30 percent, and its multi-year budget plan calls for overall cuts of 60 percent or more by the year 2002. The cuts will have two effects.

First, the transition to renewables that Shell envisions will probably be slowed somewhat, since America remains the leader in many relevant renewables technologies and U.S. government funding remains a sizable fraction of R&D funding worldwide. The transition, however, even if slowed, seems inevitable at some point in the middle of the next century.

Second, when the transition occurs, the United States will miss what may well be the single largest new source of jobs in the next century. Mature areas like automobile manufac-

turing and aerospace haven't been significant net job producers for the country in two decades. The most highly promoted new area—the information revolution—is unlikely to provide as many jobs as manufacturing can, because making duplicate pieces of information generates many fewer new jobs than manufacturing duplicate pieces of hardware. Yet according to Shell's numbers, annual sales in renewable-energy technologies may hit \$50 billion in 2020 and almost \$400 billion in 2040. In the later year such an industry would support several million jobs.

Moreover, as said above, the United States will be importing \$100 billion worth of oil annually ten years from now. With prudent federal investment today, that might be the peak, and we might then see a gradual decline as U.S. technology and domestic fuels, including homegrown biomass, replace imported oil. With Congress's cuts, however, we may be only augmenting our debilitating trade deficit in oil with an equally debilitating trade deficit in oil-replacing technologies.

Preventing Pollution

THE renewables revolution, inevitable or not, won't spell the end of the nation's or the world's environmental problems. In Shell's scenario overall fossil-fuel use will increase steadily for decades, peaking in 2030 at a level half again as high as today's, and will not dip below current levels until 2100. If we are to achieve genuine prosperity—higher living standards accompanied by improved environmental quality—we will need to do better.

Consider one of the nagging environmental problems around the world: urban air quality. Most cities have dark surfaces and less vegetation than their surroundings, creating a "heat island" that affects climate, increases energy use, and decreases habitability. Buildings' dark roofs and inadequate shade in summertime raise the demand for air-conditioning, so more power and pollution are generated. Heat islands raise the temperature of many cities by as much as five degrees, increasing the production of smog, which is typically created in hot weather. Finally, urban heat islands exacerbate all heat waves, contributing to summer fatalities.

We know the basics of how to cool a city: Buildings need shade trees, and buildings, roads, and parking lots require light-colored surfaces. Cooler roads might cost slightly more initially, but they would probably last 20–50 percent longer because they reduce thermal wear and reduce ultraviolet damage. Over a twenty-year period trees could be planted cheaply, and roads, roofs, and parking lots could be resurfaced during the course of normal maintenance, saving the country billions of dollars a year.

Clearly, the mitigation of urban heat islands is an important effort. The federal government has a crucial role to play in research and testing to help identify and develop the best roofing and paving materials, in funding computer models

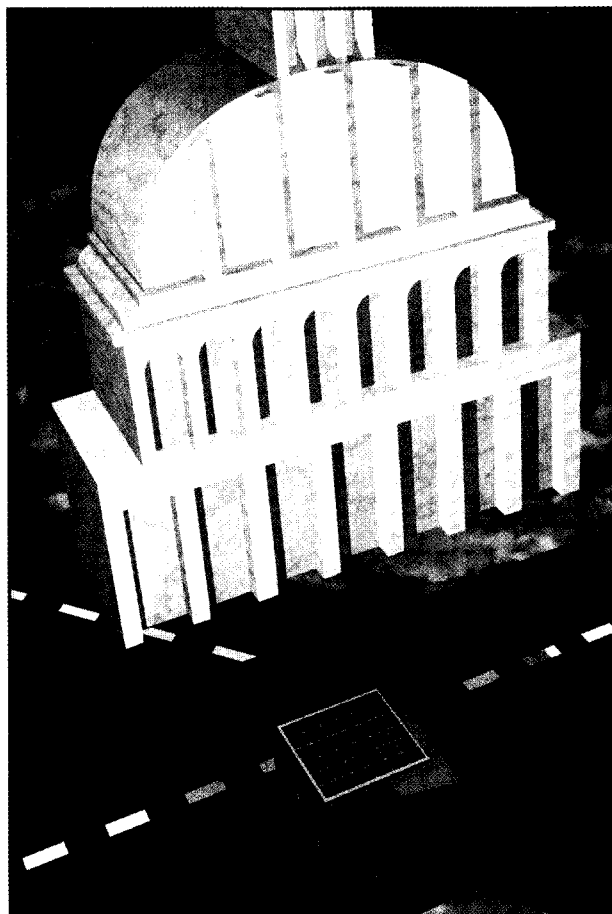
for determining the optimal approach to cooling a city, and in disseminating information in the nation and the world.

This energy-saving, pollution-avoiding approach would be part of a much broader shift in the nation's environmental policy, which is vital if we are to be a prosperous country in the next century. The environmental paradigm that has predominated since the 1960s has been based on the notion that pollution is an inevitable by-product of business and that public- and private-sector efforts should be aimed at cleaning up that pollution after the fact or safely disposing of it in land, water, or the atmosphere. This so-called end-of-pipe approach is increasingly being challenged not only on environmental grounds but also on economic ones. Michael Porter, a professor at the Harvard Business School, wrote in the September-October, 1995, issue of the *Harvard Business Review*,

When scrap, harmful substances, or energy forms are discharged into the environment as pollution, it is a sign that resources have been used incompletely, inefficiently, or ineffectively. Moreover, companies then have to perform additional activities that add cost but create no value for customers: for example, handling, storage, and disposal of discharges.

The traditional end-of-pipe approach involves three kinds of economic waste: two identified by Porter (using resource inputs and pollution outputs inefficiently) and the societal costs associated with the myriad harmful side effects of resource overuse (for example, dependence on foreign oil) and of pollution (such as human illness and agricultural loss).

Because of the close connection between energy production and consumption on the one hand and pollution on the other, the Department of



Energy provides a substantial majority—70 percent—of all federally funded pollution-prevention R&D. Pollution-prevention technologies take a variety of forms. Renewable energy prevents pollution in the production of electricity. Fuel cells offer the hope of preventing pollution in the transportation sector. Many other sectors of the economy have equally great prevention opportunities.

As Yergin's task force noted, in the past two decades a DOE investment totaling about \$1.1 billion in energy-efficient industrial technologies has yielded "approximately \$2.5 billion in documented energy savings and net productivity gains, and the accumulation

of these savings continues to grow at increasing rates." By 2000 these investments will be generating savings of about \$10 billion a year. Very few other federal investments produce as great a societal return on taxpayers' dollars.

One technology, a process for dezincing (removing the galvanized coating from) scrap steel, provided the breakthrough that industry needed in order to recycle up to 10 million tons of scrap metal annually. By 2005 electrochemical dezincing could reduce raw-materials costs by \$150 million a year, saving 50 trillion BTUs in the process, and reduce the need to import at least 70,000 tons of zinc, for further savings of at least \$70 million annually. Another government-funded technology, vacuum-pressure swing adsorption, which is now used in manufacturing 15 percent of the glass made in the

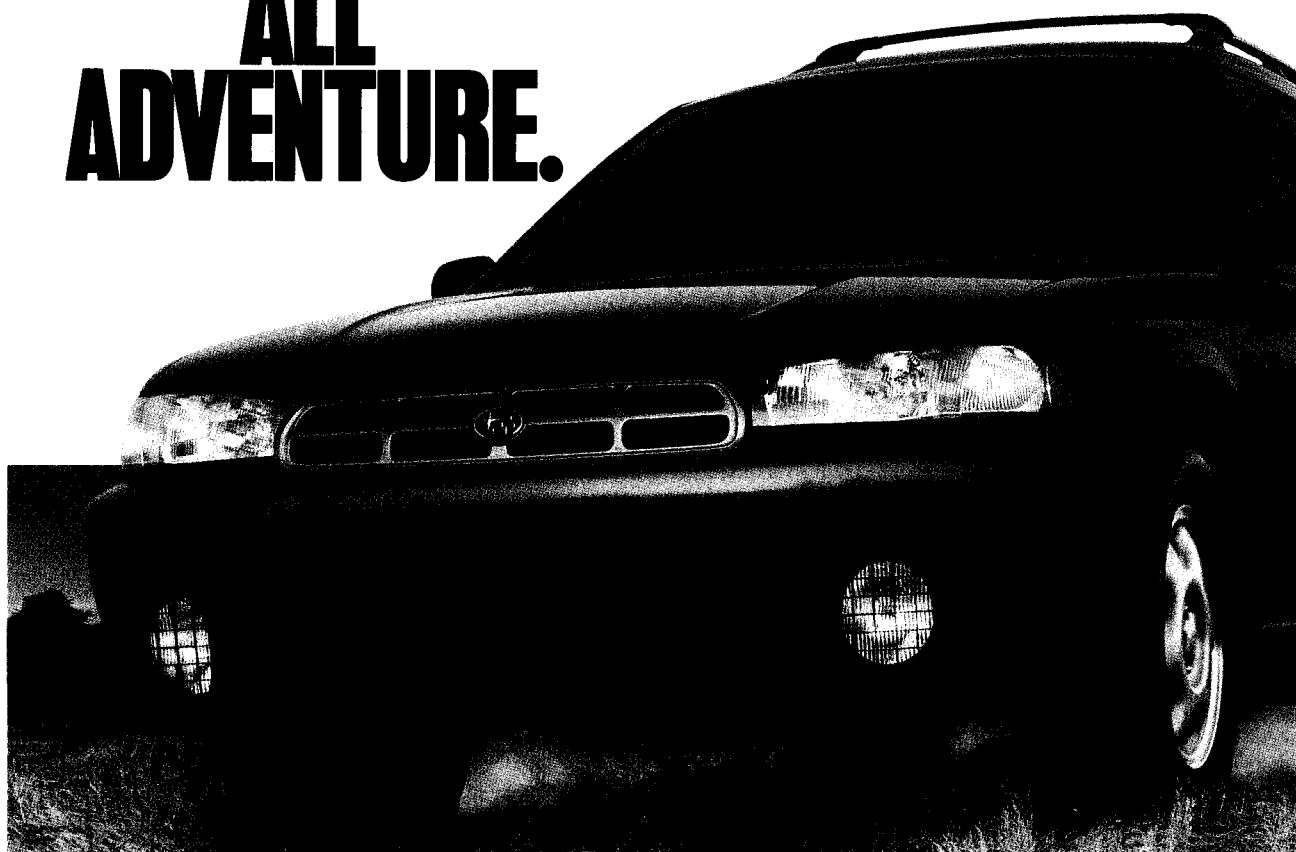
United States, reduces glass-making emissions of nitrogen oxide by 90 percent and cuts furnace energy use by 25 percent.

Something that is not widely understood is that most industrial pollution in the United States comes from the country's seven most energy-intensive industries: steel, aluminum, petroleum refining, chemicals, pulp and paper prod-

What dependence on Persian Gulf oil will grow seems inevitable. Congress has all but guaranteed that if an oil crisis comes, our response will be reactive, uninformed, and burdensome.

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1996 EPA estimate. Subaru Outback 4EAT. City 20/Hwy 26. Use for comparison only. Your actual mileage may vary.

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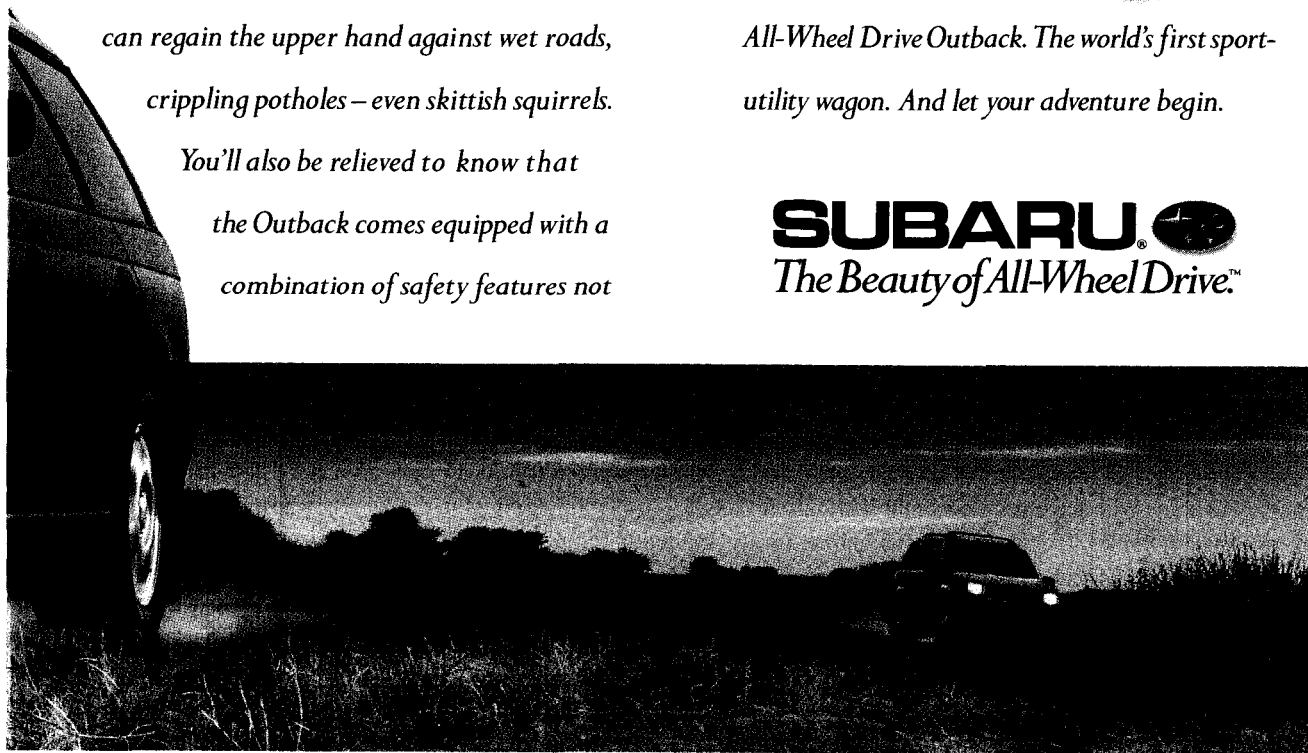
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ucts, glass, and metal casting. These industries account for about 80 percent of the energy consumed in U.S. manufacturing and for more than 90 percent of the hazardous waste. They represent the greatest opportunities for increasing energy and resource efficiency while reducing pollution. That's why the DOE has been forming partnerships with these industries to develop clean technologies.

Funding for pollution prevention is the best way for the nation to avoid the need for costly environmental regulations. The government has a role in encouraging pollution prevention for several reasons. First, pollution-prevention technologies often benefit each of many companies only a little bit, so no one company has an incentive to spend the necessary money by itself. Second, prevention has many societal benefits: it reduces energy and other resource consumption and improves the environment, among other advantages. Third, and most important, pollution prevention and resource efficiency help companies to shift money from consuming energy and resources to investing in technology and capital equipment, thus creating jobs and economic growth. Indeed, a shift from consumption to investment may be the single most important transformation the U.S. economy must undergo if we are to remain prosperous in the next century.

A 1993 analysis for the DOE attempted to quantify the macroeconomic benefits of pollution prevention. The study found that a 10–20 percent reduction in waste by American industry would generate a cumulative increase of \$1.94 trillion in the gross domestic product from 1996 to 2010. By 2010 the improvements would be generating two million new jobs, or roughly 1.5 percent of employment in that year. According to the study, this is “a relatively large impact considering that the investments driving it were assumed to be made for purposes other than increasing employment.”

Moreover, this analysis does not include the jobs to be gained from capturing the large and growing export market for clean technologies and processes. Resource inefficiency and environmental degradation are very real limitations on the attempts of developing nations to raise the living standards of their people, especially since most of those nations do not have the abundance of resources with which America is endowed. The World Bank estimates that by 2000 the countries of Asia alone will need to spend about \$40 billion a year on clean technologies. By then the global market for environmental services and technologies is expected to exceed \$400 billion. The resource, environmental, and capital constraints on the developing world guarantee a rich export market for the nation that leads the world in developing clean technologies.

As Michael Porter wrote in the *Harvard Business Review*,

We are now in a transitional phase of industrial history in which companies are still inexperienced in handling environmental issues creatively. . . . The early movers—the

companies that can see the opportunity first and embrace innovation-based solutions—will reap major competitive benefits, just as the German and Japanese car makers did [with fuel-efficient cars in the early 1970s].

That's why foreign governments are forming partnerships with their nations' companies to develop clean technologies: to overcome inexperience and ensure that they reap the benefits of early strength in the field.

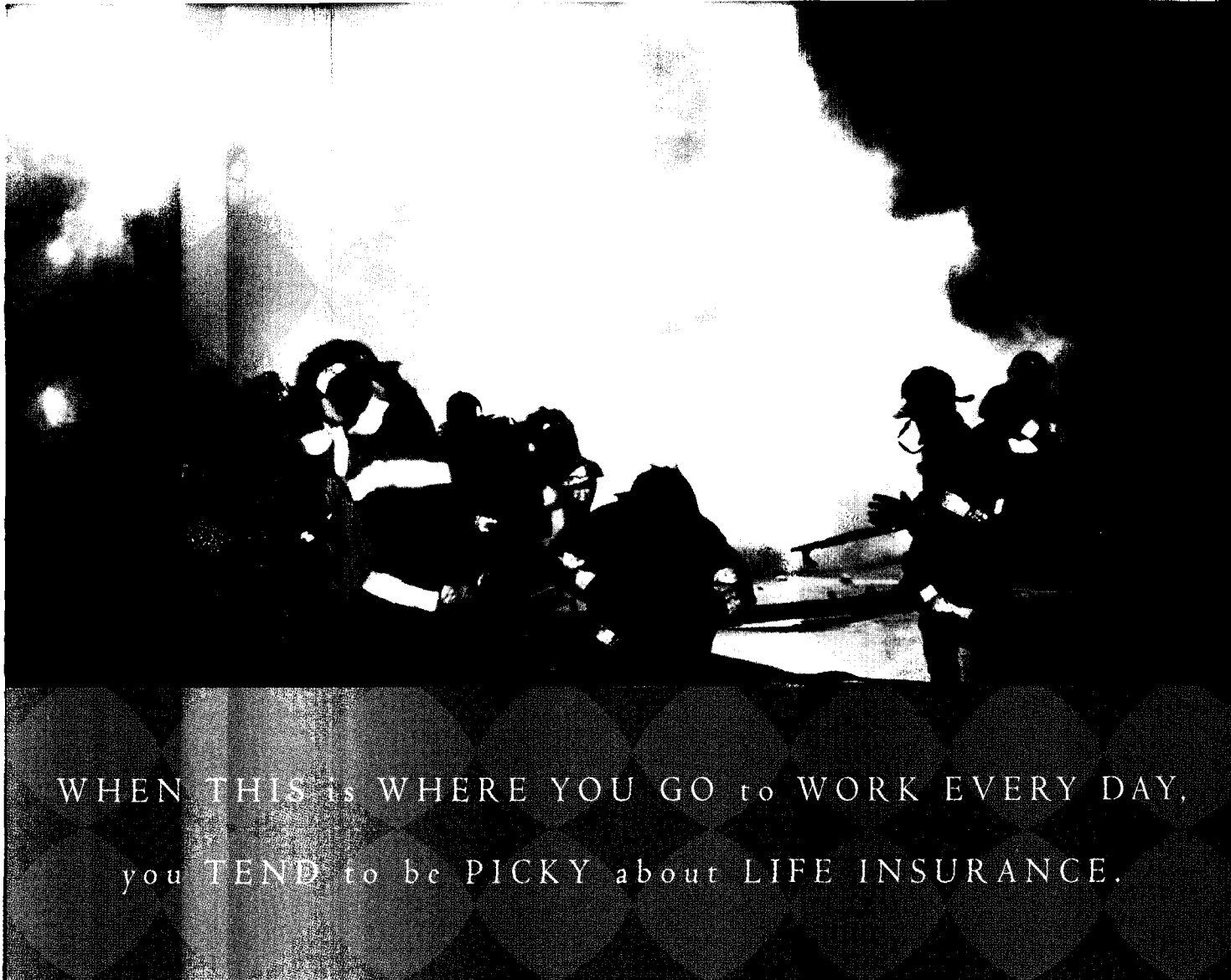
The Japanese government is betting heavily on clean technologies and renewable energy. It is vigorously pursuing the Asian environmental market through the Green Aid Plan, which is designed to help Asian countries prevent water and air pollution, recycle waste, conserve energy, and develop alternative energy sources. In 1993 Japan quadrupled funding for the Green Aid Plan, to \$120 million.

Germany, too, is moving in this direction, with regulations that increasingly push industry toward prevention, recycling, and life-cycle analysis. Proposed or pending regulations throughout Western Europe have implications for U.S. companies, as noted in a 1993 report prepared for the Saturn Corporation by the University of Tennessee Center for Clean Products and Clean Technologies: “European auto manufacturers are the current world leaders in car recycling and the use of life-cycle assessment to design environmentally superior cars.”

One of the countries most attentive to prevention is the Netherlands, which spends about \$500 million a year on environmental technologies—equivalent on a per capita basis to \$9 billion in the United States. More than a third of that money is spent on pollution prevention. The Netherlands also uses its tax code to promote clean technologies by allowing firms that practice innovative pollution prevention to depreciate their investment in one year instead of over ten years.

Congress, in contrast, has cut by a third the Department of Energy's proposed budget for the development and deployment of energy-efficient and pollution-prevention technologies—a step that threatens U.S. leadership in this crucial area. Congress has proposed still deeper cuts in its multi-year budget plans—cuts that would deny U.S. companies a great many opportunities to compete and the nation as a whole the opportunity to capture a big piece of a market whose potential is equal to that of renewable energy: several hundred billion dollars a year.

Even the vitally important urban-heat-island-mitigation program described above has gone unfunded. For the 1995 and 1996 budgets the DOE asked for \$2 million—a tiny sum by federal-government standards—for a Cool Communities program, to take the idea beyond the realm of small-scale testing. Like many programs that save energy in a cost-effective way, the program would also reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, whose increasing prevalence in the atmosphere may be changing the earth's climate. The department



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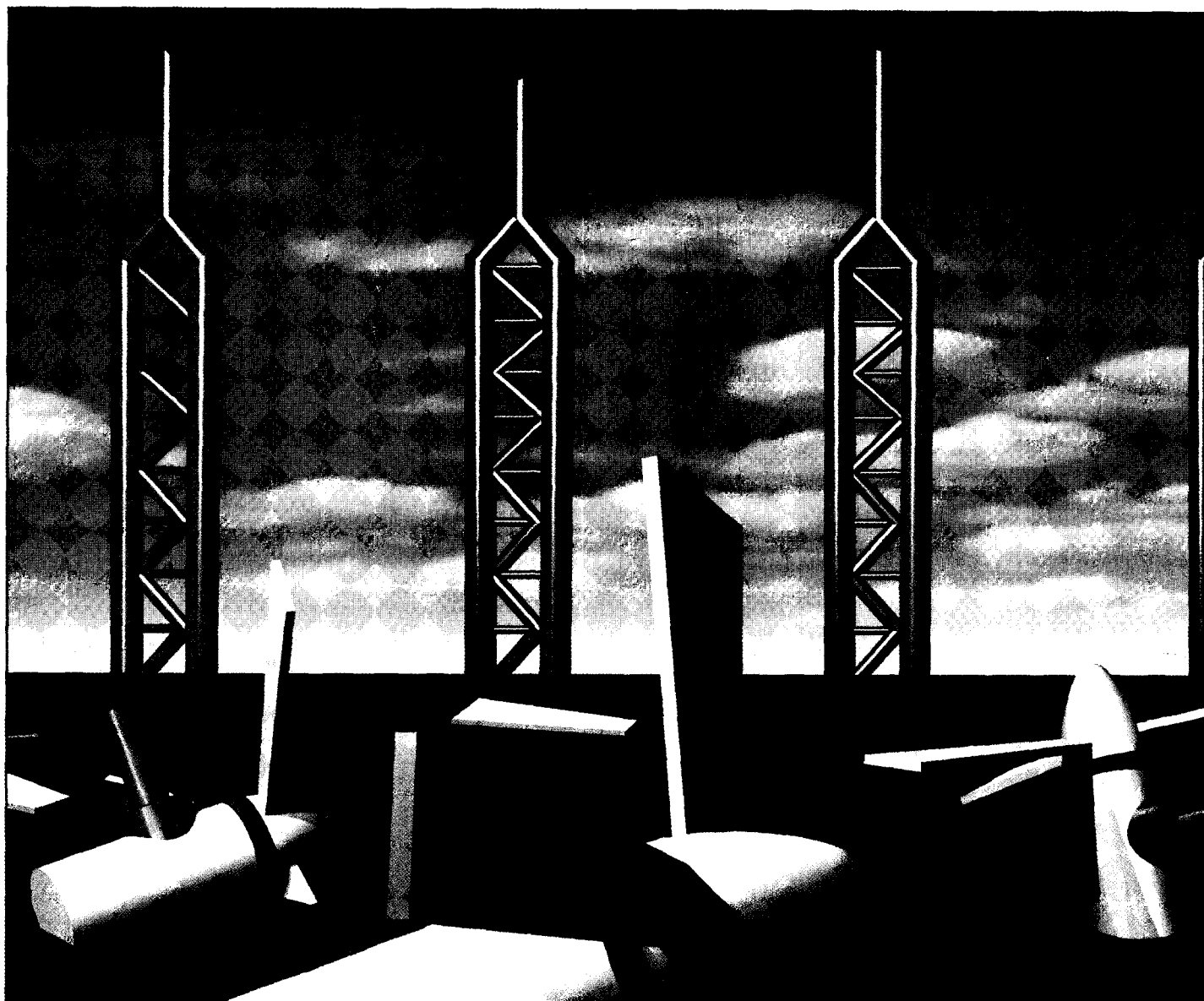


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included the Cool Communities program in its Climate Change Action Plan, to meet the nation's international commitment to try to limit greenhouse gases.

In both years Congress zeroed out the Cool Communities program. Why? Whereas the pre-1994 Congress was skeptical of global climate change, the new one is downright hostile to the concept, with some labeling it "trendy" and "scientific nonsense."

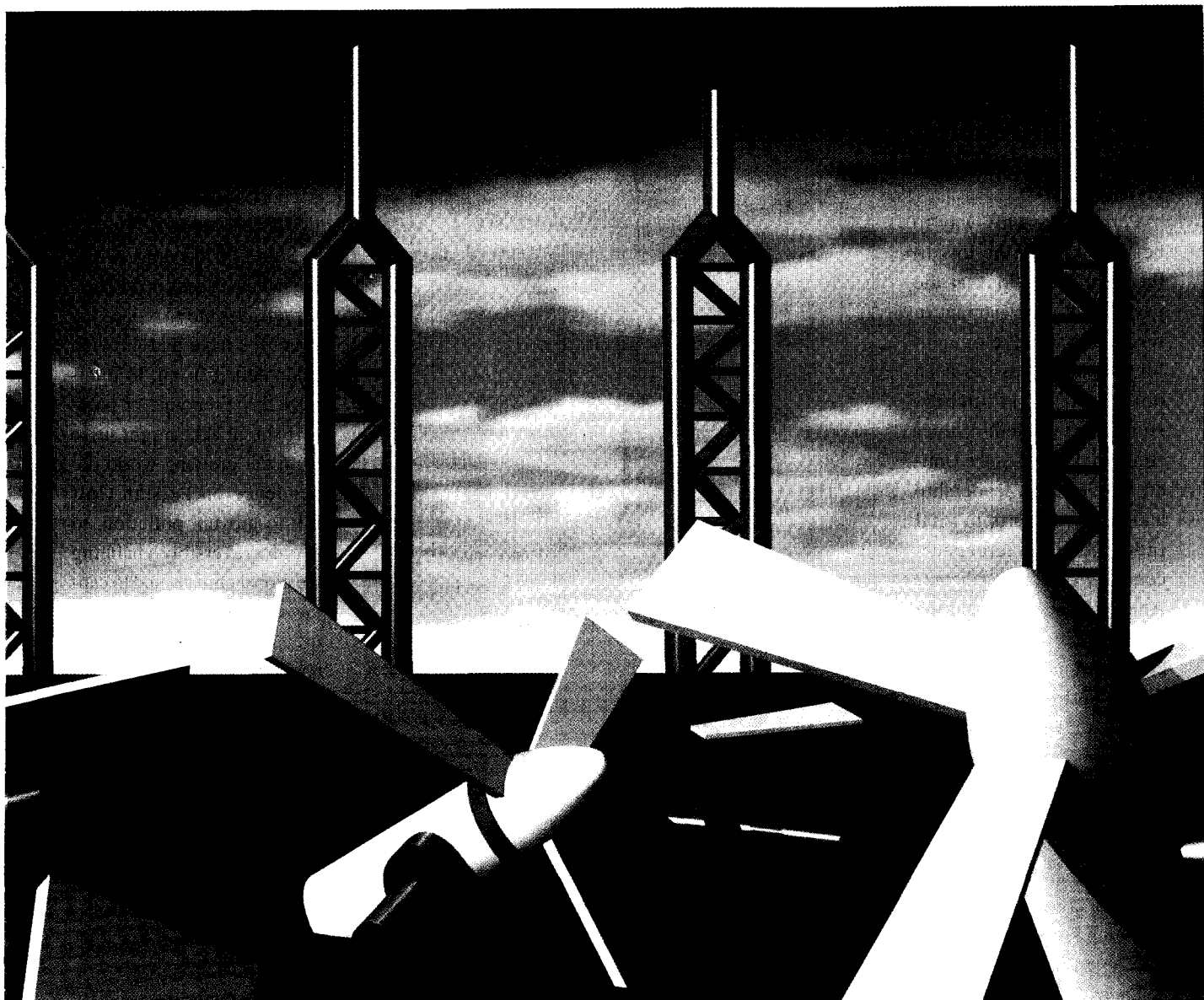
Yet at a meeting last December of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, representatives of 120 governments agreed that "the balance of evidence . . . suggests a discernible human influence on global climate." In a 1995 study scientists examined detailed records of weather over the past hundred years and concluded that weather extremes—heat, drought, excessive rain, or the kind of blizzard that the Northeast experienced in January—are becoming more common and that the extreme weather is almost certainly due to human-generated emissions of greenhouse gases.

The Economist concluded last October, "Climate change is a legitimate worry. Although still riddled with uncertainties, the science of climate change is becoming firmer: put too much carbon in the atmosphere and you might end up cooking the earth, with possibly catastrophic results."

Preparing for the Future

SOME argue that energy forecasts are notoriously inaccurate and that for the Department of Energy to base decisions on them is risky. We cannot, of course, say with certainty that an oil crisis will occur in the next decade, that a transition to renewable energy will occur as Shell envisions, or that industry worldwide will shift to pollution prevention. But each of these things seems very plausible, if not likely.

Another criticism often leveled at the DOE is that it has had big, expensive failures, such as the synthetic-fuels pro-



gram, but few successes. The department has learned from experience, however, and its R&D portfolio is diverse, emphasizing small-scale technologies that have in fact been remarkably successful in the past. The recently concluded independent review of the department's energy-research portfolio cited dozens of examples of such technologies, among them a \$3 million investment in energy-efficient windows made in the late 1970s, which has already saved U.S. taxpayers more than \$1 billion in lower energy bills; a polycrystalline diamond drill bit that has reduced the cost of drilling for oil by \$1 million per well; and many of the advances described above, including photovoltaics.

Diversity is a key element of DOE policy today: diversify the world's oil supply, and diversify America's domestic supply and end-use options. Because no one can predict the future with certainty, or know the outcome of R&D in advance, the DOE must invest in many options. The sharp cuts that Congress is pursuing narrow the country's options and leave us

far less flexibility to respond to future crises and opportunities.

Finally, some argue that government investments are "corporate welfare," a term implying a giveaway with no societal benefits. But the DOE has formed partnerships with the private sector to develop leapfrog technologies—such as the fuel cell, solar energy, and clean industrial, building, and transportation technologies—that will benefit many segments of our society.

Americans today have a duty to eliminate the deficit, rooted in their obligation to future generations, but the country also needs to acknowledge that public investment in R&D, far from being corporate welfare, is an investment in America's own future. As the Yergin task force wrote, Americans have an obligation to "assure for future generations that our Nation's capacity to shape the future through scientific research and technological innovation is continually being renewed."

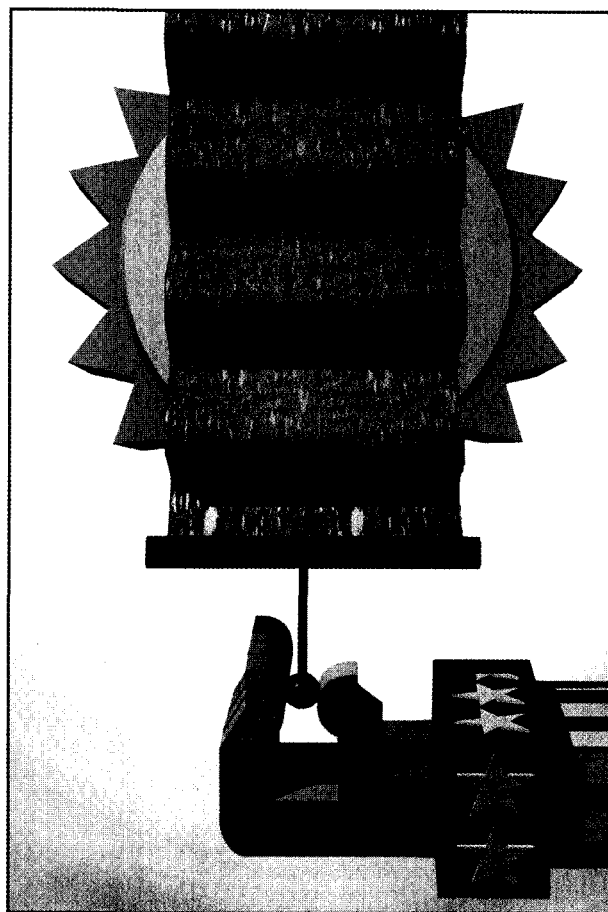
The cuts planned for the energy-efficiency-and-renewable-energy program—30 percent this year and 60–80 per-

cent over the next several years—far exceed the cuts planned in overall domestic discretionary funding to balance the budget. The impact of such cuts will be enormous.

Perhaps the only way to begin to realize the loss to the future is to look at the past. Federal investment in research and development for national needs has been one of the great success stories in twentieth-century America. Why does the United States retain leadership and strong exports in vital industries like aerospace, computers, and biomedicine? American ingenuity and the private sector have certainly been instrumental in each of these industries. Yet these industries have also enjoyed government support for decades. Who can doubt that a sustained high level of federal funding—eight times as much money as America's leading competitor provides—is responsible for U.S. leadership in biomedical and biotechnological research?

As for computers and software, the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency "virtually single-handedly created the United States' position of world leadership in computer sciences," according to a Harvard Business School case study on ARPA. And of all R&D dollars spent in the aircraft industry from 1945 to 1984, some 85 percent came from the federal government. In an unexpected benefit of the kind that is common in federal R&D, much of the turbine technology that is today generating electricity and helping to keep down utility rates had its roots in government-funded work on jet engines.

John Preston, formerly the director of technology development for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, told Congress in 1993, "It seems clear that when the government teams up with academia and industry, and participates throughout the spectrum of technology, the United States becomes dominant in that in-



dustry." America's technological lead in most kinds of fuel cells and photovoltaics stems from almost two decades of NASA, National Science Foundation, and Pentagon support, followed by almost two decades of DOE support.

Some of the most pressing national needs in the coming decades are to reduce the country's huge and growing trade deficit in oil, to minimize any economic or political threat that might arise from the growing world dependence on Persian Gulf oil, to prevent pollution, to avoid irreversibly changing the global climate, and to capture a large share of the enormous potential market for energy and environmental technologies. Remarkably, a great many of the same R&D

investments can simultaneously achieve all these ends while cost-effectively reducing the energy bills of businesses and consumers. Equally remarkably, Congress demonstrates an overwhelming desire to gut the funding for investments by the energy-efficiency-and-renewable-energy program, although it costs Americans only \$4.00 per person a year.

Nothing is clearer to those who study the matter than that the world is on the verge of a revolution in energy and environmental technologies—a revolution made possible by more than two decades of U.S. government investment. This revolution can be expected to create a number of industries that collectively will provide one of the largest international markets and one of the largest sources of new high-wage jobs in the next century, with annual sales in excess of \$800 billion.

Yet just as our foreign competitors are starting to catch on to the major trends in this American-led revolution, Congress wants to pull the federal government out of every relevant technology, leaving America on the sidelines, perhaps for good. Only a misbegotten ideology could conceive a blunder of such potentially historic proportions. ☼

3 **federal R&D for national needs has been one of the great success stories in twentieth-century America. Why else does America retain leadership in aerospace, computers, and biomedicine?**

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**SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Cigarette
Smoke Contains Carbon Monoxide.**

AN AMERICAN REQUIEM

by JAMES CARROLL

MY father: not until years later did I appreciate how commanding was his presence. As a boy, I was aware of the admiring glances he drew as he walked into the Officers' Club, but I thought nothing of them. I used to see him in the corridors of the Pentagon, where I would go after school and then ride home with him. I sensed the regard people had for him, but I assumed that his warmth and goodness were common to everyone of his rank. I had no way of knowing how unlikely was the story of his success, nor had I any way to grasp the difference between him and other Air Force generals. He was as tall as they, but looked more like a movie actor. I saw him stand at banquet tables as the speaker at communion breakfasts, at sports-team dinners, and, once, at a German-American Friendship Gala in Berlin. His voice was resonant and firm. He approved of laughter and could evoke it easily, though he never told jokes. His mode of public speaking had a touch of the preacher in it. He brought fervor to what he said, and a display of one naked feeling: an unrestrained love of his country.

A fluent patriot, a man of power. Grace and authority were so much a part of his natural temperament that I did not mark them as such until they no longer characterized him. His relationship with his sons was formal—we addressed him as “sir”—but there was nothing stern in his nature. He never struck us. He never thumped the table until the pressures of the age made it impossible not to. We always knew

*God, my father,
and the war that came
between us*

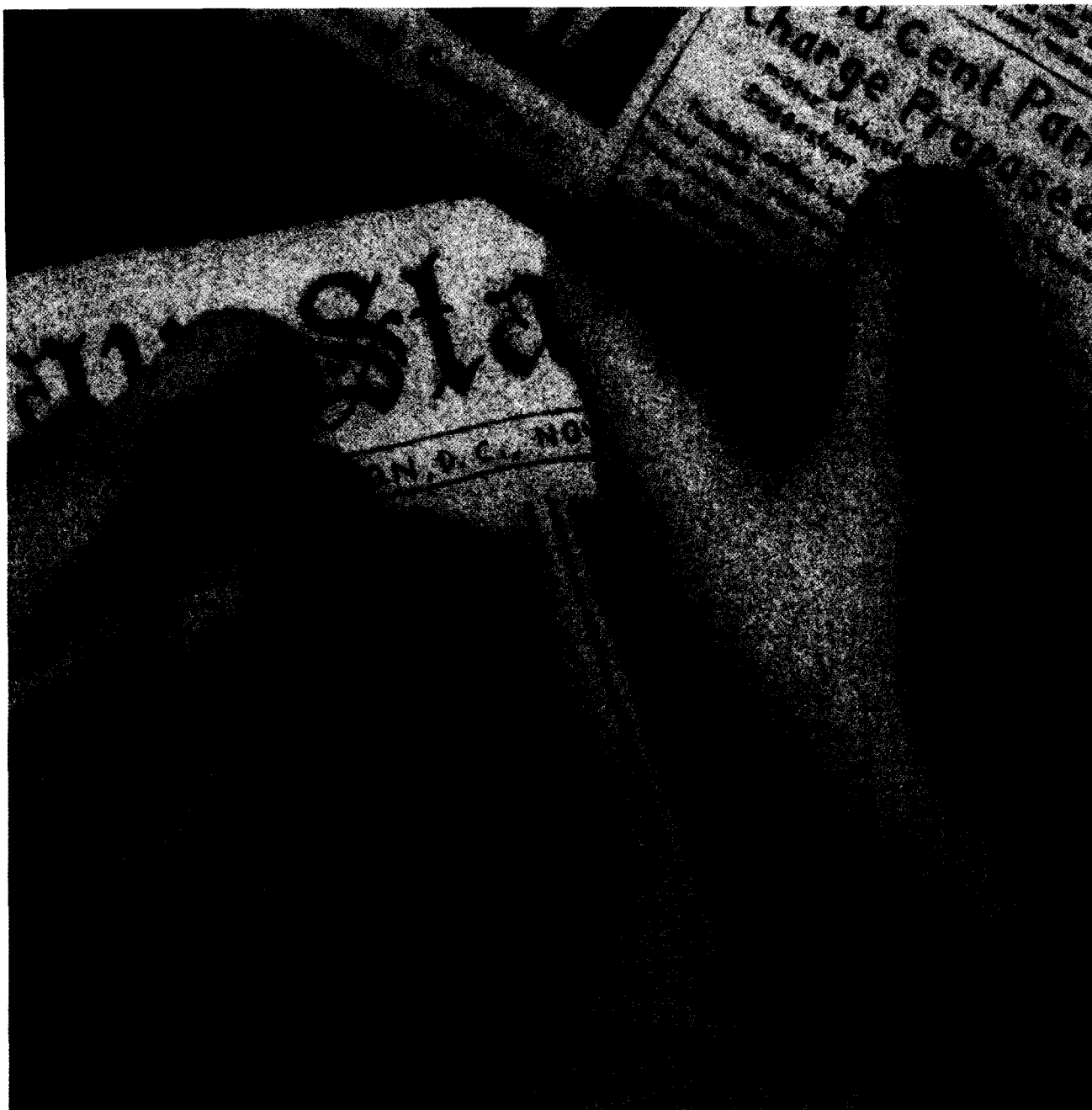
he loved us. The problem was his absolute assumption that the existing social context, the frame within which he had found his extraordinary success, was immutable. His belief in the world of hierarchy was total, and

his sense of himself, as a father and as a general, depended on that world's survival. Defending it was his one real passion, his vocational commitment, and his religious duty.

THE PAPER BOY IS A GENERAL

AND yet. One early Sunday morning in winter, when I was perhaps twelve years old, my father got up before dawn to drive me on my paper route. This was an unusual occurrence. Normally I wrestled the papers onto my red wagon, even the thick Sunday editions. I would haul my own way in several cycles around our suburban neighborhood, Hollin Hills, a new subdivision in Alexandria, Virginia. But a savage storm had moved in the night before, and now the wind was howling. Sheets of rain and sleet battered the windows. We bundled up and waited inside the front door until my distributor arrived, late, in his panel truck. Then Dad and I hurried out to load my *Washington Stars* onto the back seat of the Studebaker.

The windshield wipers kept getting stuck in the buildup of grainy ice, which we would scoop away as we returned from running the bulky papers up to the houses of my subscribers, Dad on one side of the street, I on the other. It was



raw, unpleasant work, but that morning I loved it. Indeed, in my mind it was a game, a version of “war,” which we kids were always playing then. Those dashes from our car were sorties, I thought, bombing runs, commando raids. A stack of papers—artillery shells, mines, grenades—sat between us on the front seat. We would drive for fifty yards, jolt to a stop, snap into action. I would lean toward Dad, pointing through the fogged-up windows. I was the navigator, the bombardier: “That one, that one.” Then we’d each bolt from the car, duck into the freezing rain, splash up driveways and across soggy lawns, prop the papers inside storm doors, and then dash away as if the things were going to explode. We achieved a brilliant synchrony, a teamwork that over-stamped everything that might ever separate us. Drive. Stop.

Fold. Open the door. Duck. Dash. Return. Way to go! Sir!

If my father had been the commander of a two-man suicide mission, I’d have followed him—not out of any readiness to die but out of the absolute trustworthiness of what bound us at that moment. I would have sworn that time itself could not undo it. “Neither . . . principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come”—I was an altar boy over whose head Saint Paul usually sailed, but these words had lodged themselves in me—“nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us. . . .” Paul, of course, was talking about the love of God, but my only real faith then was in the good order of the world over which Dad presided. Him—nothing would separate me from him. That morning was delicious for being just the two of us.

When we'd almost finished, something hideous happened. My father had run up to a house and dropped the paper and was running back toward the car when the door of the house swung open.

"Hey, you!" a voice boomed. Even in that wind I heard the threat in it. This was on the far side of Hollin Hills, where the newer, smaller houses were. My distributor had signed these people up. I didn't know them. The voice was a man's, and it was laced with authority. "Get back here, God damn it!"

My father stopped and stood with his back to the man, still facing me. I searched his eyes to see what was in them, but the distance between us, and the rain, made it impossible to see.

"Get your ass back here, I said. Put my paper where it belongs."

I looked across and saw that Dad had dropped the paper under the overhang protruding from the lintel—dry enough, but not quite at the threshold. I thought of making the dash myself, to spare us all. But then I saw, on a low post beside my father, a sign with luminous letters on it. Dad was looking at it too. "M. Sgt. John Smith." *Master Sergeant*. The man was military. An NCO was barking orders at a general like a drill instructor bellowing at recruits.

Again I looked for Dad's eyes, and though it seemed I found them, I could read nothing of his reaction. I was stunned enough for both of us. Caught! was the feeling. Captured! Now they shoot us. I was frozen to a spot near the rear bumper of our car. Rain and sleet pelted my face, my soaked clothing, my slimy skin, my watery bones. A shudder coursed through me, a fever and a chill at once.

"Get back here, God damn it!"

My father's stare made me feel sure this was my fault. I started to sprint toward the house, to retrieve the paper and apologize. But as I was about to pass Dad, he put his hand up, stopping me. He turned, and with a low humping movement—ducking gunfire?—he retraced his path up the sergeant's driveway, dodging rivulets, scooting past a wheelbarrow and a mound of topsoil. Sergeant Smith's car was off to the side, and now I saw the bumper sticker identifying it with Fort Belvoir, an Army post a few miles away.

The sergeant had remained in the shadow of the doorway, out of the weather. He held the storm door half open. I could see only his arm and the dark bulk of his body. He was a big man. I had collected at the house once or twice, but from his wife. In the short time they'd been on my route, they'd never complained. I took a step forward as Dad bent to pick up the newspaper. He carried it the two or three steps to the door and held it out, and the man took it, saying something I could not hear. Then Dad was running toward me again, pumping like a halfback. "In the car," he called.

I scooted around to my side, and when he leaped onto the front seat, so did I, as if we'd just pulled one off together. Our doors shut simultaneously. Dad dropped the car into gear and popped the clutch, and we lurched forward, away.

"What did he say, Dad?" I asked, though I was afraid of the answer.

"He said . . ." Dad looked at me, and I still could not read him. "He said, 'Don't let it happen again, bub.'"

"What'd you say?"

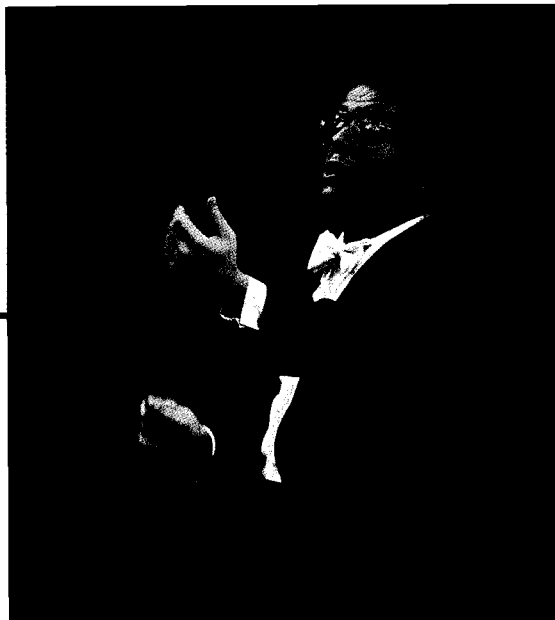
"No, sir!" His face cracked open with pleasure, sheer triumph. Sir! Even I knew how senior NCOs hated it when stupid punk recruits addressed them as if they were officers. "No, sir!" Dad repeated. Then we laughed and laughed, heads back. He slapped my leg. No, sir! I was swept up in a wave of gratitude, both that my father had not needed to pull rank on the bastard and that he'd found a way to prick him.

Our over-reaction was about more than that, though, and now I know what. The order of the hierarchy, of the universe we shared, had just been upended. Years later, in a literature class, I would learn that such reversal is the essence of comedy—and also of tragedy. But that morning, bound more tightly than before, my father and I found his near humiliation and his too sly but finally generous riposte only funny. Nothing would ever seem this funny to us again—certainly not my eventual upending of the ordered world. But that morning it was enough. We laughed until we got home, and then found ourselves unable to explain to the others why. Which only made it better.

"CAN THESE BONES LIVE?"

CATHOLICS called it Our Lady of Perpetual Help, but to the Jews and Protestants who also took turns worshipping there, it was just "the chapel." The statue of Mary and the crucifix were mostly kept behind blue curtains—Air Force blue, the color of the carpeting, the needlepoint kneelers, and the pew cushions. The little white church with its steeple and clear-glass windows could have been the pride of any New England town, but this was the chapel at Bolling Air Force Base, on the east bank of the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. A block to one side of it hangars loomed, and up the hill on the other side the imposing Officers' Club dwarfed the small church—a reminder of what really mattered here.

On a Saturday in February of 1969 more than 200 people filed into the chapel. The statue of Mary and the wretched crucifix were on display. The paraphernalia of a Roman Catholic liturgy were laid out on the side table and altar—the cruets, the covered chalice, the beeswax candles, the oversized red missal, which the chaplain's assistant would spell "missile." The congregation included Air Force officers in uniform, since this mass had the character of an official function. A number were generals who had come down from Generals' Row, the ridge road along the upper slope of the base, where the vice chief, the inspector general, and members of the Air Staff lived. These were the chairborne commanders of Operation Rolling Thunder, an air war that by



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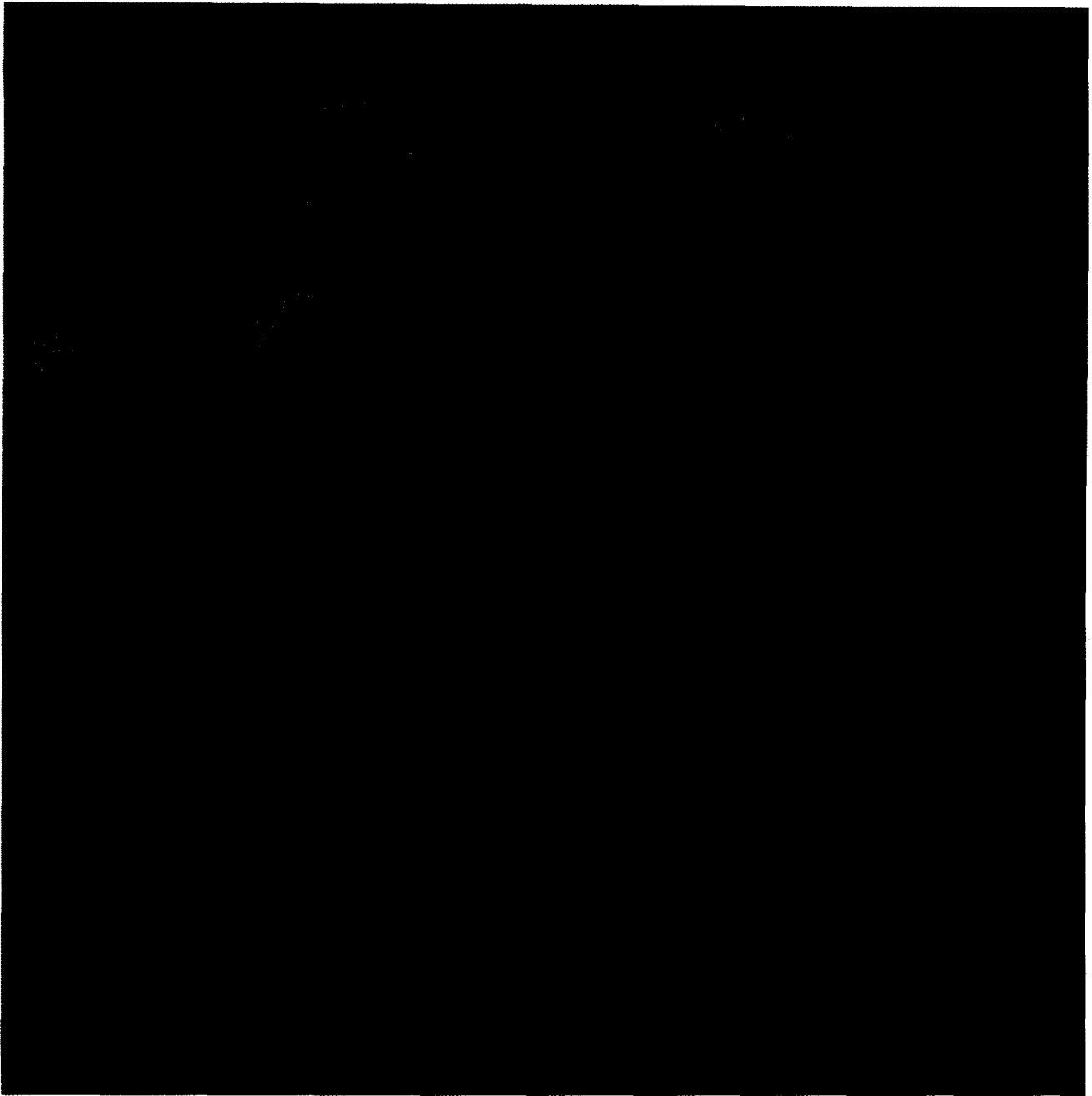
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TAKE IT TO THE STAR™

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then had dropped more bomb tonnage on a peninsula in Asia than the Army Air Corps ever dropped on Germany.

The generals and their wives, easing down the center aisle, looked for their host and hostess and found them already seated in the front pew. They were Lieutenant General and Mrs. Joseph F. Carroll—Joe and Mary. He was the founding director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, the man in charge of counting the enemy and evaluating targets in Vietnam. Today he wore civvies, but with his steely hair, fixed gaze, and erect posture, he looked like what he was. She, a staunch, chin-high Catholic woman, was in possession of a lifelong Irish dream: she was the newly minted mother of a priest. But there was worry in her fingers as the beads she held fed through them. Her lips were moving.

A bell rang. The airman at the Hammond organ and a seminary choir began with a hymn, and the people stood, joining in with a set of coughs that moved through the chapel like a wind sent to rough up the chipper happiness of the seminarians. A line of altar boys entered from the sacristy in the rear, ambling into the center aisle, leading a procession of a dozen priests wearing stoles and albs, a pair of candle bearers, a thurifer, the surpliced master of ceremonies, and, last of all, the ordained priest come to celebrate his first mass and preach his first anointed sermon. That new priest, with his primly folded hands and his close haircut and his polished black wingtips, was I.

A few minutes later the Air Force chief of chaplains, Major General Edwin Chess, by Church rank a monsignor, whom I

had known since he accompanied Cardinal Spellman to our quarters for a Christmas visit at a base in Germany years before, stood at the microphone to introduce me. "In a day when our society is so disjointed," he said to his fellow generals, "it is a great joy to know that Father Carroll is on our side."

What? On *whose* side?

I was celebrating my first mass here, as tradition required, in my parents' parish, not mine. True, I had served as an altar boy in this chapel nearly a decade before. My brother Brian had been married in its sister chapel, across the hills at Andrews Air Force Base. A rotation of Air Force chaplains had been welcomed into our family like bachelor uncles. When I had entered the seminary, after a year at Georgetown University (where I was named Outstanding Air Force ROTC Cadet), it had been with the specific intention of becoming an Air Force chaplain myself. General Chess had been my spiritual director.

And no wonder I'd harbored that ambition. Air bases were like sanctuaries to me. I loved them—the air policemen saluting us at the gates, the sprawling hangars, the regular roar of airplanes, the friendly sergeants in the base exchange, the Base Ops snack bar, the mounded ammo dumps amid stretches of grass on which I'd played ball. Air Force bases were a realm of mine. I grew up a prince, a would-be flyboy, absolutely on the side of everyone in blue. But now?

On *our* side—when had that unambiguous phrase ceased to describe my position? Perhaps in November of 1965, when below my father's third-floor window at the Pentagon a thirty-one-year-old Quaker named Norman Morrison set himself on fire. It took a couple of years, but by October 21, 1967, I was standing on roughly the same spot below my father's window. No self-immolator, I only chanted anti-war slogans—and I dared do even that only because tens of thousands of others stood chanting with me. I was sure it would never occur to my father that I was out there, and I was careful not to isolate myself from the throng. He never saw me.

While in the seminary I had embraced as an ideal Daniel Berrigan, the Jesuit priest and poet. Only months before my ordination he and his brother led the infamous raid on the draft-board offices in Catonsville, Maryland. On their side? Compared with the Berrigan witness, my anonymous participation in Washington's tremendous anti-war demonstrations was the height of timidity. In secret I had taken the stainless-steel model B-52 bomber that was my prize for that ROTC award out to a ravine behind the seminary and hurled it, the napalm machine, into a fetid swamp. I remember its gleaming arc as my version of the gods dispelling in midair—their annihilation, not ours, as Wallace Stevens had it, "yet it left us feeling that in a measure, we, too, had been annihilated." Those photographs of little slant-eyed people with melted chins and no eyelids and charred blue skin and fused fingers had given new meaning to the old word "hit," as in "hit of napalm."

I had had dreams about the war, about flying airplanes in

it, but my puerile fantasy had become a nightmare. Once, I dreamed of crashing a jet plane into my parents' house on Generals' Row. But it was all a secret, and not just from them. When, only a few months before, General Curtis LeMay, a 1968 vice-presidential candidate, had put a savage warmon-gering on display, I could not square my shame with the near worship I had felt for him as our next-door neighbor at Bolling in the early sixties. That was a secret too. I dreaded the thought that my fellow protesters might learn who my neighbors were, not to mention my father. In public, standing alone, I had never declared myself on the war. But what did it mean to be alone? I was two people, and considered independently, each of my selves seemed to have integrity, but this was belied by the fact that I could not bring them together. For the longest time I could not speak.

And now? What to my father surely seemed a proper obeisance had become to me the secret cowardice of a *magnum silentium*. He had reason to take for granted the reliable decorum of my first priestly performance. But my mother, with her worrying fingers, had reason to be anxious, for she had learned never to trust the arrival of a dream, even if she could not quite imagine how it might shatter.

Despite my clerical draft exemption, or because of it, mounting the tidy pulpit of that pristine war church felt exactly like conscription. On *our* side? The chief chaplain's words had hit me like a draft notice, and I felt as naked as any inductee before my well-clothed brothers, friends, and neighbors; before a few of my fellow seminarians, hardly peaceniks; before beaming chaplains and generals; before my parents; before—here was the deepest feeling—the one-man congregation of my father. I could no more look at him than at God.

I remember looking at the other bright, uplifted faces. One was my brother Dennis, who before that year was out would be a draft fugitive. Another was my brother Brian, who before Dennis returned from exile abroad would be an FBI agent, catching fugitives like him. I remember the beveled edges of the wooden lectern inside my clutching fingers. The Scriptures in front of me were open to a text I had chosen myself, departing from the order given by the liturgical cycle. And I remember:

The hand of Yahweh was laid on me, and he carried me away . . . and set me down in the middle of a valley, a valley full of bones. He made me walk up and down among them. There were vast quantities of these bones on the ground the whole length of the valley; and they were quite dried up.

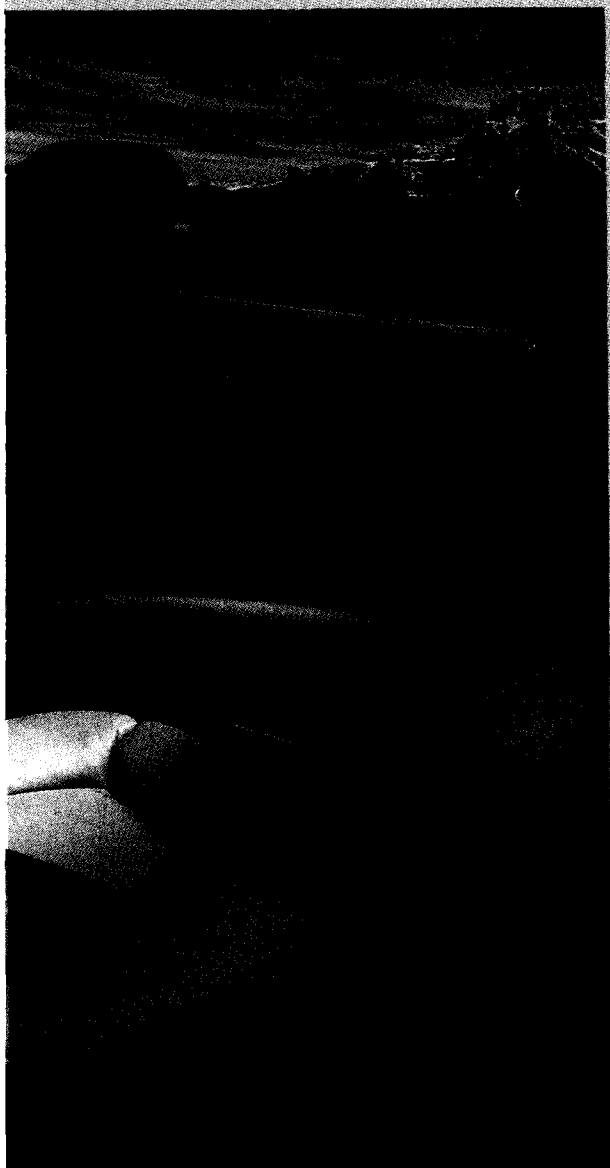
A mystical vision? The prophet Ezekiel in an epileptic trance? Yet news accounts not long before had described just such a scene in the valley below a besieged hilltop called Khe Sanh. William Westmoreland had proposed using nuclear weapons to break the siege. Casualties had mounted; 10,000 men had been killed in a matter of weeks. That carnage was in my mind when I, presumptuously, chose Ezekiel's text.

Dry bones: the metaphor rang in the air, a double-edged

It Isn't Just The Leather T



What Fits You Like A Glove.



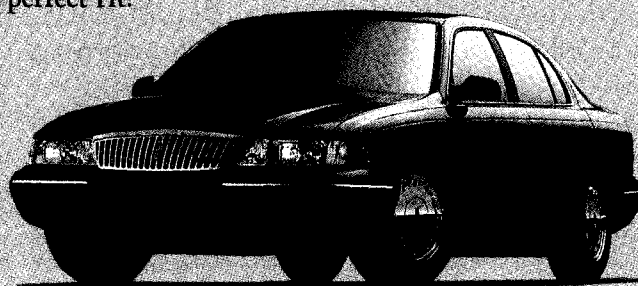
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image of rebuke, cutting both ways—toward the literal Southeast Asian valleys of the dead and toward the realm of crushed hopes about which some of us had never dared to speak. “Can these bones live?” I now asked in my excursus, repeating Ezekiel’s refrain. “Dried and burned by time,” I said, “and by desert wind, by the sun, and most of all”—I paused, knowing the offense it would be to use a word that tied the image to the real, the one word I must never use in this church, never use with them—“by napalm.”

It was as specific as I dared get—or as I needed to. Others in that congregation may not have felt the dead weight of that word, but I knew my father would, and so would the other generals. No one but opponents of the war referred to the indiscriminately dropped gelatinous gasoline that adheres to flesh and smolders indefinitely, turning death into torture or leaving wounds impossible to treat. Napalm embodied the perversion of the Air Force—how “Off we go into the wild blue yonder” had become the agonized screeches of children. There was a sick silence in the chapel that only deepened when I repeated, “Can these bones live?” But now the meaning was Can they live after what you have done?

That was not a real question, of course, about the million Vietnamese whose bones the men in front of me had already scorched, or the more than 20,000 Americans who had fallen by then. They were dead. And even a timid, metaphoric evocation of their corpses seemed an act of impudence. “Can these bones live?” I realized that I had unconsciously clenched my fist and raised it. All power to the people! Hell, no, we won’t go! My fist upraised, as if I were Tommie Smith or John Carlos on the medal stand at the Mexico City Olympics, as if I were Bobby Seale. I recall my stupefaction, and now imagine my eyes going to that uplifted arm, draped in the ample folds of my first chasuble. “Can these bones live?”

I answered with Ezekiel’s affirmation of the power of Yahweh, the great wind breathing life into the fallen multitude—an image of the resurrection hope central to the faith of Christians. I reached for the spirit of uplift with which I had been trained to end sermons, and perhaps I thought I’d found it. Yes, we can live and love each other and be on the same side, no matter what. (“Peace,” as LeMay’s Strategic Air Command motto had it, “is our profession.”) None of us is evil. God loves us all. Who am I to judge? Coming from one who had just spit the word “napalm” at them, what crap this must have been to those generals.

Can these bones live? The answer to the question that day was no. We all knew it. In my mind now I look down at my parents, stiff in the front pew, my mother staring at the rosary beads in her lap, my father stupefied like me, meeting my eyes. He must have known that I had chosen this text. That violation of the liturgical order would have been enough to garner his disapproval. But a biblical battlefield? He must have known exactly what it meant. Bones? Vietnam? To ask the question was to answer it. My fist was clenched in my fa-

ther’s face. “Prophesy over these bones!” Yahweh commanded. And, coward that I was, I did.

In the Catholic Church to which I was born, the theology of the priesthood affirmed that the effect on a man—always a man—of the sacrament of orders was an “ontological change,” a transformation at the deepest level of his essence and existence. It is an absurdly anachronistic notion, I would say now, but that morning I was living proof of it. My ordination had given me an authority I had never felt before. In my first sermon as a priest it prompted me to break the great rule of the separation of Church and state, claiming an expertise not only about an abstract moral theology but about its most specific application—an expertise that my father, for one, had never granted me. “I was not ordained for this,” I would have said, sensing the wound that my timid reference had opened in him. “But I can’t help it.”

After my first mass there was a reception at the Officers’ Club, and I was not the only one who noticed that my father’s fellow generals did not show up. They had no need to pretend, apparently, that my affirming peroration had undone the damage of my impudent reference to the war. My father stood rigidly beside me in the boycotted reception line. We were the same height, but his posture was better than mine and I thought of him as taller. Looking at it from his side, as I was conditioned to do, I saw that his presence next to me displayed a rather larger portion of parental loyalty than I deserved. For more than two years I had feared that if I dared even hint at my rejection of the war, if I hinted at my not being “on his side” in the home-front war against armies led by the Berrigans and even Bobby Seale, he would neither understand nor forgive me. In prospect, to a young man, such a consequence is fearsome—but abstractly so. I anticipated my father’s reaction accurately, but I never imagined how debilitating to him would be not my rejection but all that it symbolized—the hierarchical order by which he lived upended—or how disheartening to me would be our lifelong alienation.

A SPOILED PRIEST

ONLY the day before, I had been ordained in New York by His Eminence Terence Cardinal Cooke, the Military Vicar, the warriors’ godfather. After the mass, as Cardinal Cooke left the altar, we *ordinandi* approached the communion rail, each to his section. The ritual is that immediately following the ceremony the newly ordained priest imposes his first priestly blessing upon his mother and father. An imposition of hands. An imposition.

Thirty-five years before, Joe Carroll and Mary Morrissey had risked everything to be together. He had trained for the priesthood himself, obtaining his entire high school and college education in the seminary. In the last hour he had refused his own ordination, defying his cardinal, his mother, the Church, and, by all lights, God. Then Mary had stared that act

Rare coal from Titanic in limited availability for \$25

By Don Nagle
Media Services

(New York) RMS Titanic, Inc. president George Tulloch drew immediate media attention from CNN, CNBC, FOX, CBS, USA TODAY and hundreds of other newspapers and broadcasters when he announced the availability of the authentic coal that was aboard the RMS Titanic when it sank on April 15, 1912.

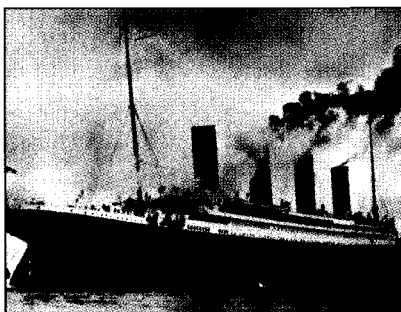
Phone calls and letters began pouring in. A conservator in Michigan wrote, *"Your efforts are certainly most appreciated by TITANIC enthusiasts like myself all over the world. I personally can't thank you enough for providing this most sacred artifact...at such an affordable price. You are to be commended."*

Expeditions to recover the coal and other artifacts cost \$100,000 a day. Only a limited quantity of coal has been salvaged. The danger of diving 2½ miles beneath the ocean surface in a submersible, subject to 6,000 pounds of pressure per square inch, makes each dive a perilous venture.

Certificate of Authenticity

Each piece of coal is presented to collectors in an ebony-finish display with a plexiglass protective cover. Those who buy the coal receive a brass plaque custom-engraved with their name, along with an individually numbered certificate of authenticity signed by Mr. Tulloch of RMS Titanic, Inc., the salvor-in-possession of the famous ship, and Commander Paul Henri Nargeolet, the French oceanographer who captained the recovery vessel on the treacherous North Atlantic waters.

The historic coal, along with the display case and engraved



ON APRIL 10, 1912, RMS TITANIC, THE WORLD'S MOST LUXURIOUS FLOATING HOTEL, LEFT PORT ON ITS MAIDEN VOYAGE.

brass plaque, costs \$25 plus \$4.95 for shipping in the U.S. and \$14.95 for shipping to Canada, Mexico and most foreign countries. It is as rare an object from a major historical event that anyone could own, much like a moon-rock brought back by astronauts.

Virtually Priceless

A 1912 poster announcing the maiden voyage of the RMS Titanic sold in October for \$12,110 at Christie's in London. As reported in USA TODAY, "The

genuine shipboard object that will ever be sold.

This makes the coal collectible virtually priceless.

The funds generated by the sale of the coal will help establish a traveling museum exhibition of more than 3,600 artifacts recovered from the Titanic, to present a unique collection of objects from The Gilded Age. Aboard the ship were many of the most wealthy and notable personalities of the early 20th century.

Those acquiring the coal will be named as Conservators and their names kept in a permanent log at the museum, along with original blueprints of the luxury liner and other important documents.

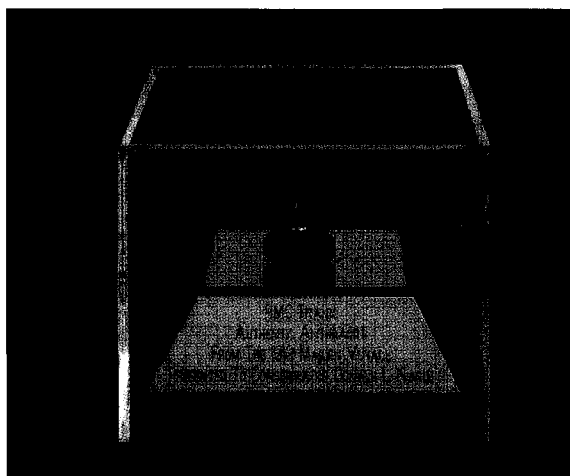
For availability of the coal, RMS Titanic, Inc. has set up a toll-free hotline: 1-800-511-6444, which can be accessed 24 hours daily, 7 days a week. Credit card orders are accepted; C.O.D. is available.

To get your Titanic coal by mail, send a check for \$29.95 (U.S.) or \$39.95 (Foreign: payable in U.S. funds) to Titanic Research & Recovery Ltd. and mail to:

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Due to the international demand for the rare historic object and the custom-engraving of up to 20 letters or spaces on each brass plaque, RMS Titanic, Inc. indicated that delivery of the Conservator's display may take eight to ten weeks.

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EACH INDIVIDUALLY NUMBERED PIECE OF COAL FROM THE TITANIC IS ATTRACTIVELY DISPLAYED IN A MUSEUM-QUALITY CASE WITH A CUSTOM-ENGRAVED BRASS PLAQUE.

Titanic has been a global obsession almost since it sank April 15, 1912."

The ship's coal is the only

of sacrilege in the eye and found a way to second it. They had married in violation of all they had been raised to believe. Whatever his success, Joe was, and always would be, a spoiled priest. It would be impossible, despite an otherwise magical ascent, ever to feel out from under that shadow. Until now.

"May the blessing of almighty God . . ." My kneeling mother's head was bent before me. She was wearing a black mantilla, what she'd worn each of her two times in the presence of a Pope. Her hands on the altar rail clutched the rosary. ". . . the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit . . ." I was quartering the air above her. In a million years she would not have looked up at me, and I did not want her to. This was not about her Jimmy, I told myself. This was about God. Jimmy did not exist there. It was not Jimmy who brought his hands together, palms downward, and lowered them to her bent head. It was a priest. ". . . descend upon you, and remain with you forever."

There, Mom. For you.

When I reached to touch her chin, she startled me by grasping my hands and pulling them to her mouth. My mother kissed my hands as if she were an Irish peasant, as if I were the Pope. Before I could say "I love you," she was turning away and then gone.

I took one step along the rail. In those vestments I felt like a float in a parade. My father in his dark civilian suit was kneeling there with his head bent, his face in his hands. What I noticed was his hair, and I was shocked to see how white it had become. He was fifty-eight years old, but I had never thought of him as anything but young and powerful.

"May the blessing of almighty God . . ." I raised my eyes toward heaven. ". . . the Father . . ." I brought the blade of my hand up in front of my own face. Behind my kneeling father were my brothers, a line of relatives from Chicago, and the blue-uniformed chaplains waiting to kneel to me. Not me—a priest. ". . . the Son . . ." I lowered my hand toward my bent-over dad. My eyes followed and were caught by something, a motion in his shoulders. ". . . and the Holy Ghost descend upon you . . ."

I put my hands on my father's head, pressing that white hair, the first time I had ever touched him there. I was so grateful to have this way to press into him at last all of my thwarted love. But as I did, it was as if an electric current flowed through me, because instantly his body convulsed. The movement in his shoulders exploded into quaking, and I feared at once, though I could not imagine what it was, that some awful breach of nature had occurred.

And so it had. I had never seen a hint of such a thing in him. My father was racked with sobbing. Crude guttural sounds came from inside the hands that remained closed upon his face. He was weeping loudly now, and I pressed my love onto his head. Oh, what gratitude I felt for the raw physical sensation of touching this man. I wanted to fill the abyss inside him, and I did not care at last if what I filled it with was myself.

RENUNCIATION

IN January of 1973—on the 22nd, my thirtieth birthday, and the day Lyndon Johnson died—the last shots of the American war in Vietnam were fired. Though it would take another two years for the Communists to seal the victory, the final pullout of GIs would occur within months. Opposition to the war had formed the spine of my priesthood. What would define it once peace came? The question sparked panic and dread. With a certain desperation I went that next June to Israel, for a summer-long retreat in the Holy Land. I firmly resolved to lay a new claim on my priestly vocation, but my brush with the sources of biblical faith changed the question entirely. It was not my commitment to God that mattered but God's to me. And that commitment simply cannot be broken. The Holy Land would be forever holy to me, because there I learned that believing in myself is not by definition the opposite of believing in God.

In the spring of 1974 I went to Washington to tell my parents of my decision to leave the priesthood. Observing the form required by my superiors, I would quietly resign from the campus ministry at Boston University and begin a twelve-month leave of absence before applying to Rome for "laicization." My mind was clear. The decision I had come to in Israel had only been confirmed. As I approached my father's house, I was acutely aware that undergirding every aspect of the religious and political transformation I had been through was the war that had come between us. Later I would realize that my time as a Paulist—from John Kennedy to Gerald Ford; from the autumn of 1962 until the week in the spring of 1975 when I sent my final letter to the Pope—had coincided almost exactly with the span of America's war in Vietnam. For better and for worse, the war destroyed the thing in me that had made my priesthood possible.

I faced my parents across the kitchen counter. "I'm taking a leave of absence from the priesthood," I said. "I'm going to resign."

My mother exhaled. Only then did I realize that she had not taken a breath since I'd told them I had something serious to say. My father was staring at the cigarette clutched in the fingers of both his hands. His decidedly unconsecrated fingers.

Finally, pushing her chair away and standing, my mother said, "I expected this." She left the room without looking at me or asking her question: Where is the place in heaven for the mother of a priest who quit?

When Dad raised his eyes, the smoke clouded them, but even so I could see painful cold rejection.

"Can I tell you why?" I asked.

He only stared at me. Where was the man who had wept beneath my hands? He was as far from weeping now as it was possible to be. So was I. And why, since I had never seen hatred aimed at me before, did I think that was what I saw? What a devil's bargain had bound the two of us all these years.



Why shouldn't he hate me, for my having been a party to it?

On the way there I had rehearsed a statement, foolishly thinking it might soothe him, and since I had nothing else to say, I recited it. "I'm leaving the priesthood, Dad, because I want to have a life like yours, with a loving wife and children."

"Children?" Now his eyes flashed. I glimpsed the full force of his feeling. Yes: hatred, sure enough. "Why would you want children?" he said. "They would only grow up and break your heart."

I found it possible to stand and say, "I'm sorry that's the way you feel, Dad." And I left, admitting for the first time in my life that I could not fill the void in him with anything I did or anything I was. The void was bottomless. He was on his own. So was I. Sad. Free.

MARY

MY family found itself reading about the effects of Alzheimer's disease just as they advanced in my father. We read about irritability, and recognized the crux of the endless mixed signals and crossed wires that made even simple transactions dangerous. We read about "perseveration," the continuous repetition of a word or gesture, and thought of his odd new habit of saying "Oh, boy" in every circumstance. We read about patients' inability to handle distress in confusing situations—"catastrophic reaction"—and my mind went back to my ordination. Were those once-in-a-lifetime wrenching sobs the start of this strange physical disease? Or were they symptoms of the old

spiritual one with which I'd been so familiar—his lifelong remorse over failing his first vocation?

Eventually there would be his versions of "hyperorality," the compulsion to put things into the mouth; of hoarding (he kept cartons of cigarettes under his bed even after he'd forgotten how to smoke); and of paranoid delusion. His last time at the wheel of an automobile was a mad midnight effort to drive from Ocean City, Maryland, to Washington, "because," as he told the trooper who tracked down his Cadillac on a back road of the Eastern Shore, "the President needs me."

Toward the end he would seem to be consoled by a compulsive fondling of stuffed animals—"hypermetamorphosis." My children, who never knew my father as a figure of power and grace (how to convince them that once, Presidents did need him?), recognized him as a fellow lover of Kermit the Frog, which they chose as a special gift for him.

The most staggering consequence of the disease—to us and, I am sure, to him—was the progressive difficulty in communication, the gradual loss of the ability to speak ("aphasia") and of the ability to write ("agraphia"). I believe now that my father's angry letters to me, increasingly halting and jerky, were what my mother insisted they were: symptoms of illness and markers on the road to the most terrible solitude. He was losing his mind, and the rest of my family was following me in losing him.

My mother was shattered. She remained a sharp and lively woman, yet unhesitatingly devoted herself to the restrictive regimen of taking care of him, first at home and then in a nearby nursing home, where she visited twice a day. She was a guardian of his dignity, making sure he was properly cleaned and dressed. She insisted that aides call him General, not Joe, although behind her back they had taken to calling him "Oh, Boy," before he stopped saying even that. For a time, mocking her, nursing-home orderlies called him "General Diet," referring to the designation card that appeared on his dinner tray. My mother ignored the gibe, and eventually the staffers grew accustomed to my father's title, and used it unflinchingly. If my mother had wanted them to salute, she would have found a way to get them to do it. Her attitude was catching. In time they also took pride in what my father had been. My mother was his omnipresent protector. She took her meals with him. Without a hint of condescension she fed him herself, as she had fed her babies years before. "Open wide," she'd say.

When I visited, I would feed him too, although what I said to get him to open up for the swooping spoon was "Airplane."

Such a symbol of all that had joined—and then divided—us. I would get word that my father was dying just as U.S. Air Force airplanes were lighting up the skies over Baghdad, at the start of the Persian Gulf War. My father, having refused to come to my wedding years before, would die without ever really acknowledging my wife and children. I choose to believe that the onset of his Alzheimer's was at

least partly the cause of this rejection. In any case his senility ended forever any chance of our reconciliation.

When I fed him in the nursing home, I always thought of those B-52s. He stopped recognizing us, which was a shocking letdown for everyone in my family except me. For the first time in fifteen years I did not sense his tensing when I arrived. I could sit with him for hours with no fear of bad feelings. I could shave him, clean his dentures, bathe him. He gave himself over into my hands. I could even tell him my stories as I was writing them. While working on a novel inspired by his life, *Memorial Bridge*, I would hold his hand and relate whole passages, including my own presumptuous interpretations of his experiences in the Pentagon. He would listen as if nothing I wrote offended him—all because he did not know what I was saying, because he did not know it was I. It was the next best thing to being reconciled.

He would look at my mother, she said, as if she were a stranger. But what seemed even sadder to her—she showed me this by holding up a mirror—was that he no longer recognized himself. One day a bright young college graduate joined the nursing-home staff as the new occupational therapist. She came upon my father in the hallway, sitting in his wheelchair beside my mother. The young woman spoke cheerfully to my father and, pulling a table over, put a fresh new pad of paper and a crayon down in front of him.

"He doesn't do that anymore, dear," my mother said. Her voice was pleasant, but she was determined to protect him from yet another failure. By then it had been three years since my father had written, more than a year since he had spoken intelligibly or recognized anyone. But while my mother explained this to the therapist, my father began to move the crayon across the paper. Both women watched his hand. Even scribbling would be an achievement.

The marks he made were not scribbling. In a sweeping, unsteady cursive scrawl he was forming letters. My mother and the therapist leaned forward. Unmistakable letters. "M," the young woman said. "That's an M." My mother said nothing. She watched his hand move across the paper, the letters becoming visible individually, until a word was uncovered.

"Mary," the young woman read, and watched while my father wrote it again. And then again. The script was jerky but legible. "Mary. Mary. Mary," down the page. He did not stop. And he did not look up. "Mary."

The young woman looked at my mother, who said, "That's me."

The next day my mother arrived at the nursing home with an entire box of crayons and a large pad of construction paper. She sat beside my otherwise uncomprehending father as he filled page after page with the one word "Mary." This went on for some days until, having forgotten again and once more in the grip of hyperorality, he put the crayon in his mouth. But my mother had her pages, his last word, the absolute treasure of her life. ☾



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"I help people find things," her aunt said. "They call me up from



Junior

by

ELIZABETH

STUCKEY-FRENCH



THE city pool was full of children that day, but I don't think that's what bothered me. I was fourteen and happy to be out with my friends. It was sunny but cool for mid-July in Iowa. A breeze flipped up the edges of our beach towels as we lined them up on the crumbling cement, anchoring them with clogs, a bottle of coconut oil, and a transistor radio that seemed to play nothing but Sammy Davis Jr. singing "The Candy Man." My friends flopped down on their backs and fell asleep, but I couldn't relax. I sat cross-legged in my faded bikini, a hand-me-down from my sister, Daisy.

Daisy was lifeguarding, but she couldn't see me, didn't even know I was there. She looked like a stranger, perched above the masses in her red tank suit and mirror sunglasses, her nose a triangle of zinc oxide. In one month she was going away to college, leaving me to take care of our father. I couldn't let myself think about how dreary life would be without Daisy. I gazed out at the pool, which was circular, with the deep part and diving island in the center. A group of four or five children splashed around at the edge of the deep water, shrieking and dunking one another. A smaller girl in a green one-piece bathing suit dog-paddled near the splashers, barely keeping her chin above water. She wanted to play too, but the other children—friends? neighbors? sisters and brothers?—ignored her. Teenagers were doing cannonballs off the high board, and their waves sloshed over her head. Nobody except me seemed to notice. The girl was paddling as hard as she could, getting nowhere.

all over the U.S. and Canada. Missing dogs are my specialty"

I stood up and waded into the water, which reeked of chlorine, and began swimming the breast stroke toward the group of children, holding my head up as a snake does. The older kids moved off toward the slide, leaving the little girl behind. When she saw me, she opened her eyes wide and reached out. I didn't have a clue how to rescue someone. I took her hand, and she clawed her way up my arm. She was on me like a monkey. Her legs swung up and wrapped around my neck, dunking me, choking me. I tried to stand, but I couldn't touch bottom. She kicked me hard, in the jaw. I shoved her away, but she held on to me. I'd had enough of this kind of treatment. My hand gripped her



head like a rubber ball. I held her under water and watched her thin body squirming in its green ruffled suit.

Someone finally screamed, and the lifeguards began blowing their whistles. Daisy dove from her chair in a

red flash. Still I held the girl under. *It's too late now* is the only thought I remember having. A man tackled me from behind, and Daisy jerked the girl from the water. The man gripped me tightly to his thick chest, as if I were trying to run away. Over on the cement Daisy knelt beside the girl and gave her mouth-to-mouth. After a few seconds she stood up, holding the squalling girl, stroking her wet hair. The ruffles on the girl's suit were flipped up and plastered to her body. "Daisy," I called out. When Daisy looked over at me, her face was slack with shock, and I realized what I had done.

Everything after that seemed nightmarish but inevitable. Daisy and I were taken up to the pool manager's office, dripping wet, to sit in plastic chairs and wait for the police. The detective who came wore a velour shirt and looked familiar, like someone I might have seen at church. Daisy reported what had happened in a businesslike voice, while I stared at the tufts of hair on my big toes, wondering if I should shave them.

The detective asked me if I had anything to add. "She tried to drown me first," I said.

"That's not how the witnesses tell it," he said.

I glanced over at Daisy. "Sorry," she said, ever the honest one. "I didn't see that part."

At my hearing we sat on a bench in front of the juvenile judge—first the detective, then my father, hanging his head, then Daisy, her arm around my father, and then me. My mother, who had washed her hands of us, didn't show. Because of my previous record—shoplifting and truancy—the judge decided to send me to the Cary Home, in Des Moines, for one school year.

THE Cary Home for Girls was an elegant brick house tucked into a cul-de-sac at the edge of an upper-class neighborhood. From the outside you'd never know it contained six teenage delinquents and their live-in counselors. We bad girls attended classes in the large attic of the house, ate pizza burgers, did homework together, and watched reruns of *The Dick Van Dyke Show*. It hardly felt like punishment.

At night, though, things fell apart. I had relentless dreams about Lisa Lazar, the little girl from the pool. She came to the Cary Home in her ruffled bathing suit and invited me outside to play. When she smiled, crooking her finger at me, I woke up terrified. I would stare at the buzzing streetlight outside my bedroom window and wonder what someone like me was doing at the Cary Home—someone who until recently had usually played by the rules, was fairly popular, had a semi-cute boyfriend, and tried her best to get decent grades.

In April, near the end of my stay at the Cary Home, my father called to tell me that his sister, Marie-Thérèse, was coming to see me. "She wants to help out," he said. I'd never met my aunt before. She and my father exchanged Christmas cards and birthday phone calls, but that was about it. "Marie stays on the move—she's a wheeler-dealer" was my father's only explanation for why we never saw her. I wasn't sure what a wheeler-dealer was, but it sounded intriguing.

On the evening of her visit I stepped into the living room and saw a fattish woman in baggy shorts and huaraches sprawled on the sofa, snoring. I recognized her dark curly hair and sharp features from an old photo I'd once found in my father's desk at the *Magruder Times*, of which he was the editor—a photo of my father and Marie-Thérèse as children, posing in chaps and cowboy boots in front of some mountains in New Mexico, where they grew up. I said, "Hello?"

She bounced up, wide awake. "I'm your aunt Merry," she said, shaking my hand. "M-e-r-r-y, as in Christmas."

We sat down across from each other, and she explained that she'd recently changed her name to Merry because she'd moved to Columbus, Ohio. "Midwesterners don't like anything Frenchy," she said.

"That's true," I said. I was disappointed that she'd changed her name and looked so ordinary and lived in Ohio. Out of the corner of my eye I saw my roommate, the klepto, in the yard, peering in through the screen window. She was sneaking out to meet her boyfriend, the arsonist. She bugged out her eyes and flicked her tongue. I ignored her. I asked Merry, "Why'd you decide to come see me?"

"Brother said family could visit," she said. "And I'm family, last I checked."

"Thanks," I said. My parents had never once been to see me at the home. My father was too ashamed, and my mother was too busy looking after her own father, Smitty, who owned the *Times*. Daisy, who had postponed college for a year, drove over every Sunday and took me out to the

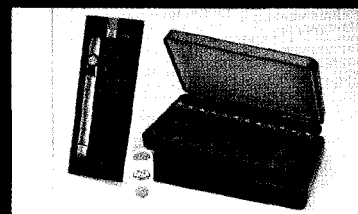


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movies or to the Frozen Custard. We always got teary when we said good-bye. She would ruffle my hair and call me Squirt, willing me to be innocent again.

"Listen, sugar," Merry said, leaning forward with her elbows on her knees. "I called Brother last week 'cause I got the feeling something was wrong. He's worried sick. I offered to look after you, just for the summer. Transitional period. Before you go home."

So they didn't want me back. "I committed a crime," I said. "That's why I'm here."

"Nice place, too." Merry looked around at our cozy living room, furnished in Early American sofas and chairs that could swallow you whole.

"I don't want to be in the way," I said. "Don't you have a family in Ohio?" I knew she had been married twice and had stepchildren.

"Oh, sure," she said. "But we won't be going to Ohio. We'll be staying out at the homeplace, in New Mexico."

My father had once written a piece for the newspaper about what it was like to grow up on a ranch—haymaking, feeding livestock, planting and watering alfalfa—but he never talked to us about New Mexico. His parents had been to visit us a few times when I was little, but I barely remembered them. Now his father was dead, and his mother was a sick old lady. "Why do we have to go out there?" I asked Merry.

She took my hand and squeezed it. One of her eyes was blue, the other green. "I'm a psychic," she said. "You're going to be helping me with a job. Mom has offered us the use of her home."

"I tried to kill someone," I said. "A small child."

"I know, sugar," Merry said. "You did an extremely vicious thing." She stood up and slung her purse strap over her shoulder, as if that settled that.

I was relieved, if only for a moment, to think that it did.

AUNT Merry and I left for New Mexico the last week of June. In Kansas she insisted that I drive her Lincoln Continental. I had my learner's permit, but I'd never driven on the interstate.

"Don't sweat it," Merry said. "The Queen Mary handles like a dream."

I sat up straight, my hands gripping the wheel as we rolled across Kansas at 70 miles an hour. Merry propped her bare feet up on the dashboard, knees tucked under her purple caftan. If I dropped down to 65, she would bark out, "What are you waiting for? A tow?" If I sped up to 75, she'd imitate a police siren.

But most of the time she talked about herself. "I wear different-colored contacts," she said. "Throws people off balance. They pop out sometimes, but I always find them. I have ESP. Had it since I was a kid. Once Brother lost his G-Man ring, and I led him right to the spot, in the schoolyard,

where it fell off his finger. Unfortunately, someone had stepped on it by then. When I was your age, Mom put me on the radio. My own psychic call-in show. I directed a woman right to where her baby had wandered off to—the bottom of a well. Brother was so jealous."

I didn't want to reveal how eager I was to learn anything about my father. "Was he?" I said in a neutral tone.

"He was," Merry said. "He got stuck with all the chores. Didn't stand up for himself. Held it all in, till he couldn't take it anymore." She started humming "Rock of Ages" and stared out the window, letting me know she was finished with that subject.

We passed a muddy lot packed tight with cattle which seemed to go on for miles, bigger than anything I'd ever seen in Iowa. Finally I asked Merry, "Do you still have a radio show?"

"Oh, no, but I still help people find things. They call me up from all over the U.S. and Canada. Missing dogs are my specialty." She studied her feet and wiggled her red-painted toenails.

Merry was more childlike, and more self-confident, than any adult I'd ever known. She didn't seem to realize, or care, how weird she was. I said, "How do you find missing dogs?" Up ahead, in my lane, a station wagon was going much too slow.

"Pass him, pass him!" Merry yelled. We surged around the station wagon and veered back into our own lane. Merry went on in her ordinary voice. "Say, for example, some rich guy calls me from Indiana. He and his wife are missing their yellow Lab, Captain Crunch. Someone stole him right out of his pen. Man and his wife are distraught. Dog's a kid substitute. They've been offering a two-thousand-dollar reward, but no leads. I'm quiet for a while, and then I say, 'Your dog is safe. I see a late-model Ford, dark green, with two men in it. They drag Captain Crunch into their car. I see them driving to New Mexico. They're taking the dog to Los Alamos, for research purposes. But they stop at a convenience store in Española, and the Captain escapes.'

"Thank God," the man says. 'Where is he now?'

"I can't tell exactly," I say. 'Put an ad in *The Santa Fe New Mexican*. You'll find him.'

"He says, 'Thank you, thank you,' and says he'll send me a check for my commission."

"Are you right all the time?" I felt as if Aunt Merry and I were aliens, flying through the wheat fields in a spaceship.

"One hundred percent of the time." She swiveled to face me, the gold trim around the neck of her caftan glittering. "I can guarantee that somebody living with her grandmother just outside Santa Fe will answer that ad, and the happy couple will drive to New Mexico to pick up their dog. My little helper will hand over most of the reward money to me, keeping a bit for herself. All the time I'll be back in Ohio, so nobody can connect us. Not that these people ever try. They

might suspect they've been had, but they've got a new dog. Everyone's happy. Even the dog."

I glanced down at the pavement racing underneath us. "I thought you had a gift."

"I do," she said. "I know how to make a living."

"I'm getting tired," I said. "My eyes aren't seeing very well."

"At the next rest area pull over and take five."

"What if you can't find a dog that looks like theirs?"

"He's waiting at Mother's. Captain Crunch Junior." She swung her feet back up on the dashboard. "It'll be an adventure, sugar," she said.

MY grandmother lived in a low brick house with tiny windows, surrounded by ramshackle outbuildings that looked like they were floating in a sea of red dirt. A few cottonwood trees punctuated the gray-green sagebrush. "This is a ranch?" I asked Merry.

"We used an irrigation system," Merry said.

When we got out of the car, I saw a dog tied to the corner post of the front porch. He was yellow, but he looked part Lab and part something else. He was smaller than a Lab and had floppier ears. "They'll never believe this is their dog," I said. He strained at the rope and wagged his tail. "Is that the best you could find?"

"Now, don't speak ill of our canine friend," Merry said. She took out of the trunk of her car the two bags of groceries we'd just bought and thrust them into my arms. Then she leaned farther into the trunk and emerged with a small TV set.

"What's that for?" I said.

"For you," she said, and grinned. Her teeth were too white.

Inside, while Merry unpacked the groceries, I wandered through the house. It was nearly bare of furniture. I could find no evidence that my father or Merry had ever lived there, not even a photograph. There were two rooms with single beds and small dressers in them, and one of these bedrooms was strewn with a woman's clothes. I tiptoed into another room, where my grandmother, balding and feeble, lay in a hospital bed under a pile of old quilts. There was a smell like sour milk. "Grandmother," I said. She lifted her head and yelled out, in a surprisingly strong voice, "Run, run—the Baptists are after you." I backed away.

In the den Merry was bustling about in one corner, unplugging a TV set and hoisting it from a table onto the floor. A slight red-haired woman wearing a black jumpsuit leaned against the wall with her arms folded, watching Merry. Merry was talking to the woman but not looking at her. "I figured you didn't really need this fancy set," Merry said, "and we can really use it, what with Dick's poor vision." She lifted the little TV she'd taken from the trunk and set it on the tabletop. "There. That'll do fine."

"Does it work?" the red-haired woman said.

"Been working for years. Came from a motel liquidation."

The woman snorted. "I guess it's black-and-white."

"It's good quality," Merry said, patting the small TV like a pet.

A little while later I stood out in the driveway. Merry sat behind the wheel of her Lincoln, her elbow crooked out the window. She'd stayed only long enough to unload my things and swap TVs, and now she was heading back to Ohio. I held on to her door handle. It was getting dark. "I can't do it," I said.

"It'll go as smooth as silk." Merry winked her green eye at me. "Read those want ads every day, sugar. Should be any time. I'll be back before you know it."

I tried to think of something that would slow her down, if not stop her. "What should I tell Dad?"

"I wouldn't tell him anything." She started the car. "Considering your track record. And his."

"What'd he do?" I said, but she didn't seem to hear me. She stepped on the gas, flicking her hand in a wave as she spun out onto the dirt road.

I watched the red dust settling and thought about Iowa—our two-story white house with its porch swing and sweet-smelling lawn that rolled under my tree house down to the cornfield. At home on a summer evening the air would be full of humidity and comforting sounds—crickets, country music from passing cars, the distant voice of the baseball announcer at City Park. Daisy would be cooking my father's dinner—maybe pork chops and baked potatoes. I couldn't picture what my mother would be doing, because she lived with Smitty in his Victorian house across town. For years Smitty and my mother had eaten breakfast together every morning at the café, and every afternoon she had helped him with his business affairs.

Finally, after she'd spent all of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with Smitty, my father said to her in a joking voice, "You like him better than you do us. Why don't you just move in with him?" She called his bluff and did just that. Since Daisy had already taken over at our house, it wasn't that much of a change.

I stood there in the driveway till the sun had dropped behind the mountains. Then I untied the dog and took him inside.



I GOT into a routine right away. Every morning at breakfast I read the entire newspaper, saving the lost-and-found ads for last. When I'd finished my Grape-Nuts, I put the bowl on the floor, and Captain Crunch Junior stepped up and licked the bowl clean and then some, causing it to roll around the kitchen floor.

"You kids stop that racket!" my grandmother screamed from her bedroom.

The red-haired woman, who turned out to be my grandmother's live-in nurse, sat across the table from me, reading *Silent Spring*, by Rachel Carson. She was half Mexican, her name was LeeAnn, she was forty-two, and her hair, she told me, was naturally red.

The first morning I was there, she'd said, "Aren't you going to get bored? How long are you staying?"

Merry hadn't warned me not to tell LeeAnn about our scheme, but I knew I shouldn't. Besides, having a secret made me feel important. Merry had chosen me to help her, and since I was in a position to help, why shouldn't I? "I'm here on a rest cure," I told her. "For my mental health."

"Well, then," LeeAnn said, "you'll fit right in."

After breakfast I would grab an apple from the fridge and make three peanut-butter sandwiches. In the living room,

which was totally empty, I tied a rope to Junior's collar and we set out for a walk down the dirt road toward the mountains. Strange-looking houses lined the road—adobe houses with scraggly yards from which dark-skinned people stared at me. Sometimes I pretended that Lisa Lazar skipped along beside us, barefoot, in her silly green bathing suit. The air was clear and dry, and the sky was so blue it almost hurt to look at it. We strolled past cactus plants and lizards sunning themselves on white rocks. To the south were rounded hills with ribbons of pink running through them. The mountains loomed straight ahead. We walked and walked until I let myself realize that we must be miles from my grandmother's house. Nobody knows me here, I thought, and nobody knows where I am. That thought was a signal that we'd gone far enough for one day. Junior and Lisa and I found shade under a pine tree and split the sandwiches and the apple.

When we got back, worn out and thirsty, we napped till dinnertime—frozen dinners and Purina Dog Chow that Merry had left. In the evenings I watched the little television in the den with LeeAnn, who was always doing something else at the same time, like sewing a hem or balancing her check-book. At seven she spoon-fed my grandmother her apple-sauce, and at nine she gave her a sponge bath. During commercials we talked about all kinds of things, including the existence of God. Neither of us believed, although we both wanted to. I couldn't bring myself to tell her about Lisa.

One night, while we were watching *Nightmare Theater* and LeeAnn was knitting a Nordic sweater, she told me she thought Merry was a sleazebag. "She's sold off every antique, everything of value, in this house."

"What's wrong with that, if nobody else wants it?" I said, realizing I sounded just like Merry. "Merry looks out for herself," I said. "I kind of admire that."

LeeAnn shook her head, clacking her needles together. "I think it's disgusting. At least wait till the poor thing's dead."

"So why do you work here?"

"I won't be here forever," she said. "Besides, I always liked Mrs. St. John. I grew up down the road."

"Did you know my father?"

"He used to let me ride his pinto pony." She held up the front of her sweater and admired it. "Merry used to make us kids march around in a parade just so she could be the majorette. Your father was always helping people, fixing things."

This didn't sound like my father. Whenever he was home from his job at the newspaper, he spent hours sitting in his chair, staring out the living-room window at the cornfield behind our house, tapping his empty pipe on the edge of the coffee table. Daisy would bring him fresh glasses of iced tea and rub his shoulders, and sometimes he remembered to say "Thanks, honey." Their behavior sickened and infuriated me, but I knew better than to let on.

LeeAnn resumed her knitting. "You seem like such a well-adjusted kid," she said.

MY PLACE

—My loft, and how
you came

over letting your coat go
as if it was your room

already! And what I was
doing there is

not clear
to me—now—nor

why I am
standing here dumb

lips shaping amazing words
that fall forth duds.

Breathless, my pulse
is doing a waltz

through this room
and very same

"bachelor apartment" air
where, O, you were.

—STEPHEN SANDY

"Young adult," I said, and we both laughed.

Later that night Junior hopped up onto my bed, settled himself on my feet, and fell asleep. I lay awake, wondering what LeeAnn would think if she knew the truth about my family and the horrible thing I'd done. I wondered if she'd think I was crazy. Other people thought I was.

After the incident with Lisa my father took me to a psychiatrist in Indianola. He wore a hearing aid and kept asking me how I felt. "Fine," I kept saying, feeling sorry for him.

He sighed. "Is anything bothering you?"

"Well," I said, "I keep wondering where that girl's parents were when she went out into the deep water. Why weren't they watching her?" The psychiatrist wrote something down in his notebook, and I knew I'd said the wrong thing.

At night, after my father and Daisy were asleep, I would pace around our house, shredding tissues and gasping for air. During the day, while they were at work, I lay on the couch watching soap operas with the sound off. Once, my mother dropped by, dressed in her pale-pink suit, my favorite, the one she wore to Garden Club meetings. She sat down beside me on the couch, trying to appear calm, but her eyes were fixed and tense, like a cat's. "The whole town knows what you did," she said. "Do you realize your father had to publish an article about it? In Smitty's paper?" My father had worked his way up to editor-in-chief, but my mother never let us forget that Smitty owned the paper. She grabbed my ankle and shook it. "Why would you attack that little girl? What were you thinking?"

I couldn't stand seeing my mother, the president of the Magruder Garden Club and Ladies' Literary Society, behaving like this. I couldn't stand her helpless hand-wringing. I said, "I hated that girl's frilly bathing suit."

My mother burst into tears. "What's wrong with you?" she said, but she didn't wait for an answer. She got up and ran out of the room.

Junior, a hot weight at the end of the bed, let out a loud snore. I jerked my feet out from under him, but he didn't wake up. I knew what was wrong with me, and my mother did too, even though she pretended otherwise. I had become a delinquent because I did not intend to take my turn as Daddy's nursemaid. I did not intend to make myself useful.

AFTER my first day in New Mexico I didn't go in to see my grandmother again. It was too depressing. I never called home, and when they called me, I said I was having a very educational experience. I told my father that Merry was off on a short business trip—going to some motel liquidations—and that she'd left me in the care of Grandmother's nurse, LeeAnn, and that LeeAnn had taken me sightseeing on her days off. I mentioned some places I'd read about on the back of the New Mexico state map.

"How's Mom?" he asked me.

"Sweet," I said. "But kind of confused." I told Daisy I'd bought a square-dancing dress with the fifty dollars she'd given me, and she pretended to be horrified.

Once, my mother called and said that she'd seen Lisa's mother in the Jack and Jill, and that Lisa was doing fine. "Outwardly," my mother added. Every night Junior slept at the foot of my bed.

The ad appeared after I'd been in New Mexico nearly a week. "Lost: Yellow Lab, from a convenience store near Española. Two years old. Goes by Captain Crunch. Reward. Call Steve and Cyndi Richardson."

That morning Junior and I walked past the horse pasture, past the school bus converted into a house. We kept following the road when it turned and climbed uphill through some pine trees. A hawk circled overhead, screeching. We'd never gone this far before. Lisa turned and ran back down the hill. I realized that the real Lisa no longer looked like the girl in the bathing suit. For one thing, the bathing suit wouldn't fit. She was a year older. She was bigger, taller, and smarter.

Junior stopped and gazed back at me, questioning.

"Lisa may not ever want to swim again," I said. "Did you know that?"

He sat down on his haunches, his eyes fixed on my sack of sandwiches.

The phone number in the ad was busy till 8:30 that night. "He showed up at my door hungry and weak, like he'd walked a long way," I told Cyndi. "Does your dog have a little white spot on the crown of his head?" Merry had coached me on what to say.

"Yes!" Cyndi shouted. "You're the first person who's mentioned the spot. I've gotten four calls already, and nobody's mentioned the spot. It's him, Steve. We found him!"

"I'll send you a picture, so you'll know for sure." I tipped back in my chair, feeling cocky. Merry had taken a picture of Junior, a tad blurry, and it was already in an envelope with the address and a stamp on it.

"You don't have to," Cyndi said. "I can tell by your voice that Crunch is right there in the room. We'll be there in three days."

"Three days?" I rocked my chair back down with a thud, which startled Junior, who was sprawled out in front of the screen door.

"Give him our love, will you?" Cyndi said. "Tell him we're on our way."

"Would you like to tell him yourself?" But she'd already hung up. "Jesus H. Christ," I said. Junior flopped his tail.

"What was that all about?" LeeAnn stood in the kitchen



doorway with her hands on her hips. She wore gym shorts and a T-shirt that said ART WON'T HURT YOU. She said, "What are you and Junior up to now?" She pronounced "Junior" in the Spanish way, "*Hooneor*," and I loved to hear her say it.

I said, "If you're a real nurse, how come you don't wear a uniform?"

She said, "If you're not a Christian, how come you're talking to Jesus? *Twilight Zone* is on. Grave robbers. Right up our alley."

DON'T let them leave without him," Merry said on the telephone later that night. "And listen, sugar. About the reward money: Get cash. I'll give you a third."

"I don't want it." Talking to Cyndi, hearing her voice, had made me feel guilty about tricking her.

"I'll start a savings account for you," Merry said. "For college."

"I'm not going to college."

"Escape money, then. In case you get into another jam. You're impulsive, just like Brother."

So this could go on and on, I thought, this getting into one jam after another. "Okay," I said.

"See you on the weekend," Merry said.

"But what if they know I'm lying?"

"Remember: You're not saying he *is* their dog. You're just saying he could be."

I hung up and wandered into the den, where LeeAnn sat in the recliner, finishing a crossword puzzle, her reading glasses perched on the end of her nose. "Whatever you and Merry are cooking up," she said, "I don't want to know about it."

"It's a losing proposition," I said.

"Six-letter word for nuts," LeeAnn said.

"Insane." I flopped down on the hairy brown couch. My bare thighs immediately started itching. "What was my father really like?" I said. "Was he some kind of rebel?"

She lowered her newspaper. "Because he held up the liquor store?"

I sank back into the couch, feeling queasy. After a while I said, "How long was he in jail?"

"Not a day," LeeAnn said. "Your grandfather got him and his football buddies off scot-free. They were drunk when they did it, but still. Worst thing that could've happened, him not being held responsible. He slunk off in the dead of night and never came back."

I closed my eyes.

"Didn't you know?" LeeAnn said. "Shoot, I'm sorry. You acted like you did."

"I knew," I said, and I felt as if I had. My father had committed a stupid public act, left his home forever, and was still waiting for his comeuppance. I might be doing the same

thing if Merry hadn't come along. It was much smarter to operate in the gray areas of life, the way Merry did. She would never cower; she'd never wait around for anything. And she'd never get caught.

CYNDI called me at noon from Española on the third day, and I gave her directions to the house. Afterward I sat on the front porch in my white sundress, drinking lemonade and telling myself I was the picture of trustworthiness. LeeAnn had gone to the laundromat, and when she got back, I was going to tell her that Junior's rightful owners had shown up out of the blue to claim him.

I gazed down the road. With Junior gone, I thought, I'd be too afraid to go on hikes, and Lisa had grown up and left us. That's what I was focusing on then—how bored I'd be without them.

A dusty gray Volvo pulled into the driveway. Cyndi stepped out first, smoothing down her flowered smock. She was very pregnant. "Tabitha?" she said, starting toward me. That was the name I'd given. My alias.

I set down my glass and jumped up to greet her. Confidence, I told myself. Pretend you're Merry.

Steve climbed out of the driver's side. He wore a sweaty T-shirt and running shorts, as if he hadn't even bothered to change before heading off across the country. He looked at me skeptically and didn't speak. I knew then that this trip was Cyndi's idea.

"Hello," I said, shaking Cyndi's damp hand. Her hair was long and wavy, pulled back in a messy ponytail. She had a large, pleasant face. I said, "How was the drive?"

"Horrendous," Steve said. "Illinois. And then Missouri."

"Would you like some lemonade?" I said.

"Where is he?" Cyndi said. "Where's Crunch?"

I'd shut Junior in my bedroom, thinking they should see him first in dim light. "Resting," I said. "It's his nap time."

When I opened the bedroom door, my knees were shaking. Junior reclined on my bed like a prince. He raised his head but didn't get up. Cyndi gasped and covered her mouth.

Steve crouched on the floor. "Crunch. Come here, boy."

Junior stared at them. "He doesn't remember us," Cyndi said, swaying on her feet. "Is that possible?"

"He's not awake yet," I said. "Wake up, Junior." He leaped up and pranced over to sit on my foot. I said, "I've been calling him Junior."

"Junior." Steve patted the floor. Junior went to Steve, wagging his tail. I held my breath. Steve scratched Junior's ears and then inspected him all over, even examining his teeth. Finally Steve looked up at me, but I couldn't read his expression. "Thank you," he said gravely.

Cyndi plopped down on my bed, her face pale. "I still can't believe it. I haven't been able to sleep; my blood pressure's gone up. My due date's in six weeks."

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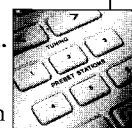
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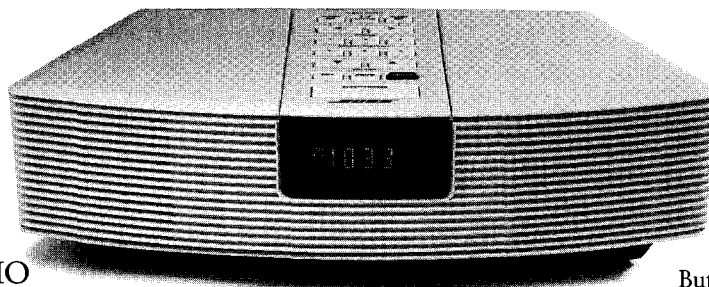
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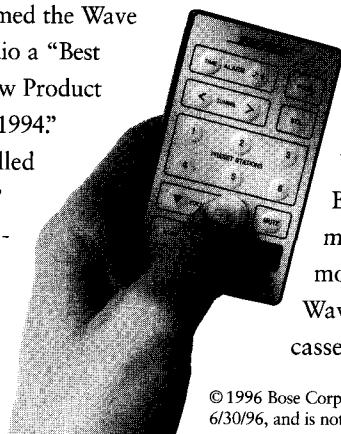
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"Sit," Steve said to Junior. Junior licked Steve's face. "Lie down," Steve said. Junior jumped up and put his paws on Steve's shoulders. Steve said, "He doesn't remember anything I taught him."

"Dumb dog," I said.

"Crunch," Cyndi called in a soft voice, and Junior trotted over and hopped up on the bed beside her. "Now he remembers," she murmured, hugging him. "He remembers. Hello, Crunch."

What if it really is Crunch? I thought. It could be. Or Crunch reincarnated. I started to cry, and I imagined Merry shaking her head in disgust.

"Are you sad about giving him up?" Cyndi said. "I'm sorry. I've been thinking only about myself."

"He's not Crunch," I said. "He's Junior. *Hooneor*."

Cyndi frowned at Steve. "Where are your parents?" Steve said.

"My grandmother." I gestured with my head. "She's senile." I wiped my nose on the back of my hand and then wiped my hand on my dress.

"I'm sure you're upset," Cyndi said. "You can get another dog."

"No," I said. "I'm trying to tell you. This dog came from the pound."

Cyndi and Steve exchanged concerned looks. "We're just glad you found him," Cyndi said, scooping up Crunch and handing him over to Steve. Crunch lay awkwardly in Steve's arms with his legs sticking straight out, and they both stroked him under the chin. They didn't care whether or not Junior was Crunch. They loved him no matter what.

"I almost drowned someone," I said. "I was scared and I took it out on her."

Cyndi patted my shoulder. "You'll be okay, Tabitha," Steve said.

"My name's not Tabitha," I said. "It's really Sophie St. John. My parents sent me out here from Iowa for the summer, but my grandmother

doesn't even know me." I stopped crying, and my heart began to pound. I could feel their generosity infecting me. "You're not suckers," I said. "You're good people."

"That's nice," Cyndi said. She turned to Steve. "We should get going."

Crunch began to squirm, and Steve dumped him onto the floor. "I hate to leave Sophie here," Steve said to Cyndi. "We could give her a ride back to Iowa. It's on the way."

Cyndi slipped her arm around Steve's waist and sagged against him, but she didn't protest. I sensed they were playing some sort of game, a game in which they took turns leading valiant, ill-conceived rescue missions. One proposed a

course of action that most people would consider absurd, and the other went along as though it all made perfect sense. Their game, the kindness and futility of it, and the way it bonded them together, made me like them even more.

"Why don't you call your parents?" Steve said. "We've got room in the car."

I sat down on the edge of my bed and blew my nose, remembering the last time I'd been home. Merry and I had swung by Magruder on our way to New Mexico. She stayed in her Lincoln, listening to the radio, while I went inside. My mother was there for the occasion. One by one they came forward and kissed me, blank-faced, as if I were in my coffin and they'd already cried themselves out. Daisy slipped me a fifty-dollar bill. "Buy yourself a summer dress," she said. My father hugged me with one arm, his face turned away. "See you soon," my mother said, opening the door like a hostess at a party. They seemed united, more like a family, with me gone.

Steve and Cyndi were watching me, waiting for my decision. "Thanks anyway," I said.

I followed them out onto the front porch, Junior trotting between them like their long-lost son. Cyndi and Junior climbed into the car, but Steve stopped in the driveway. "Is a check okay?"

I had forgotten about the reward money. "Don't worry about it," I said.

"That was the agreement," Steve said, turning toward the car. "I'll get my checkbook."

DURING the night my grandmother died in her sleep. LeeAnn discovered her in the morning and called the funeral home. After the coroner pronounced her dead, the funeral-home men took her away, wrapped in one of her quilts. LeeAnn and I spent all morning on the phone. We couldn't reach Merry. She was already on the road somewhere between Ohio and New Mexico. My father said they would come out to New Mexico as soon as they could get a flight.

In the afternoon I asked LeeAnn if she wanted to go for a walk. The sky was clouding up behind the mountains, but we set out anyway. "We get storms every day in midsummer," LeeAnn said. "No biggie."

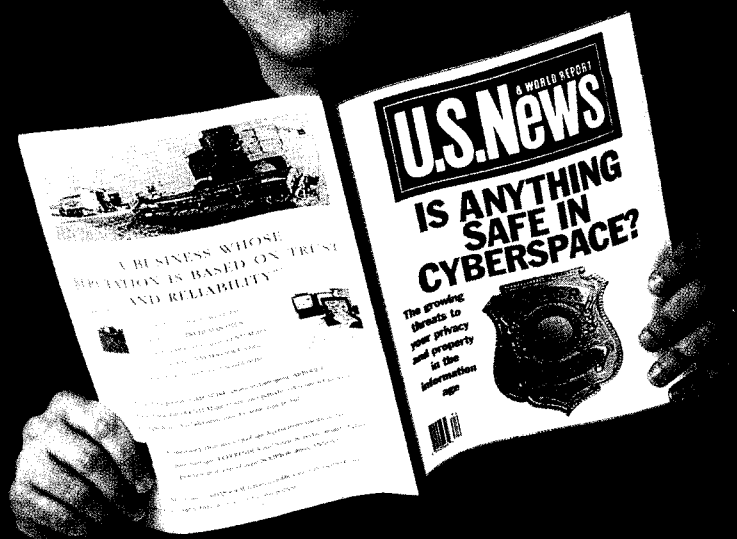
"I never got to know Grandmother," I said. "I wish I felt sadder. I'll miss Junior more than I will her."

LeeAnn, striding along beside me in shorts and hiking boots, just nodded. It had never occurred to me that LeeAnn would own a pair of hiking boots. It was odd seeing her outside, in the daylight, moving along with such assurance that she seemed to leave an impression in the air behind her, like an echo. I realized she'd been walking on this road for years. "What are you going to do now?" I asked her. "Where will you go?"

"I've got a husband in Santa Fe," she said. "I need to make amends and move on."



**"My gray matter
feels alive I tell you! Alive!"**



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I waited for her to elaborate, but she didn't. "Me too," I said. Someday I would have to talk to Lisa, the real Lisa, face to face. A gust of wind kicked up the dust around us, sending a plastic cup flying past our feet. We bowed our heads and kept walking. Clouds rolled over us, and I felt the first drops of rain. LeeAnn stopped and pointed to an adobe house with a rail fence around it. I'd gotten used to seeing it every day on my walks. "That's where I used to live," she said, and we stood there in the rain looking at the house, which was for me transformed again into something mysterious. The windows in front were open, and white lace curtains whipped in the wind.

WHEN Merry pulled into the driveway that evening, I left LeeAnn in the kitchen and went out on the front porch to get it over with. Merry nosed her Lincoln right up to the steps as if she were docking a boat. Then she climbed out, brushing her hair from her eyes with a bejeweled hand. She was wearing the purple caftan, which was stained between her breasts. Coffee or chocolate. "I'm beat," she said.

I sat down on the top porch step, wishing I didn't have to give her bad news.

She came up and sat on the step beside me. "Run get the money," she said.

I forced myself to look in her eyes, which were both brown. "I've got a check, made out to me. I think we should split it fifty-fifty." I'd practiced saying this in front of the mirror, but even so my voice lacked authority.

She sighed dramatically and dropped her head. "And I've got a funeral to pay for."

"How did you know about the funeral?"

"I picked up negative vibes all across Missouri," she said, "but I didn't want to believe them. Finally I pulled over and called Brother."

We sat in silence, looking out at the sagebrush. My mouth was so dry I couldn't swallow. Merry glanced at her watch. "Holy moley." She stood up and jumped off the steps. "Help me get my stuff in, sugar," she said, dashing around to the rear of her car. "Then we need to carry the furniture out of the house. A man's coming for it in half an hour." She opened up the trunk and peered at me around the lid. "We have to do it before Brother gets here. He'll try to lay claim to the whole kit and caboodle." Her face disappeared and I could hear her rummaging around in the trunk.

I remembered what LeeAnn had said about Merry the majorette, making all the kids march behind her in a parade. I could see there would never be a halt unless I called it. "You're on your own, Aunt Merry." I hadn't practiced saying this, but it sounded as if I had.

Just then LeeAnn yelled through the open window, "Fried chicken!"

Merry slammed her trunk shut and blew past me into the house. I went in behind her, walking at a leisurely pace.

THE following summer, when I was sixteen, I got a part-time job at the Magruder city pool. They put me down in the basement of the rec center, next to the locker rooms. I sat on a stool behind a battered wooden counter, collecting admission fees and handing out wire baskets and locker keys attached to large safety pins. Most of my earnings I put in a savings account I'd started with my half of Steve and Cyndi's check. Escape money.

One Saturday afternoon after a heavy rainfall, when the pool was virtually empty, Lisa and her mother came through. Lisa's hair was cut in a bob, and she wore a Speedo bathing suit. Her mother, a beautiful, haggard-looking woman, trailed behind her, wearing thongs with big plastic daisies on them, smoking a cigarette.

"Hello, Lisa," I said. My face flushed, and I wished I'd kept my mouth shut.

Lisa looked up. She didn't recognize me or even seem to wonder how I knew her name. "Hi," she said. She grabbed her mother's hand and tugged. "I'm going off the high dive. First thing."

Her mother smiled at me and rolled her eyes. She didn't recognize me either. "We got a show-off here." She slid some change across the counter. "The diving board at the club isn't as high as this one."

I held out their baskets and keys, and Mrs. Lazar took them. I had to say something more to Lisa. "I'm the one who held you under water. Two summers ago." I smiled idiotically. "Sorry."

Lisa nodded. "Okay." She started running down the hall toward the women's dressing room. "Cowabunga!" she yelled.

A line was forming behind Mrs. Lazar. She glared at me, gearing herself up to give me a piece of her mind, even though, I could tell, she'd rather not be bothered. She took a drag of her cigarette. "I sincerely hope you got rehabilitated up in Des Moines," she said.

"I did," I said. "Completely."

Kids in line were pushing and shoving. Mrs. Lazar kept glaring at me, waiting for me to grovel. The ash on her cigarette was ready to drop onto my counter.

"But then again," I said, "I might do the same thing any time. Or worse."

"I see," she said. She turned and addressed a suntanned woman behind her. "I guess they let anyone work here. This place used to have some class."

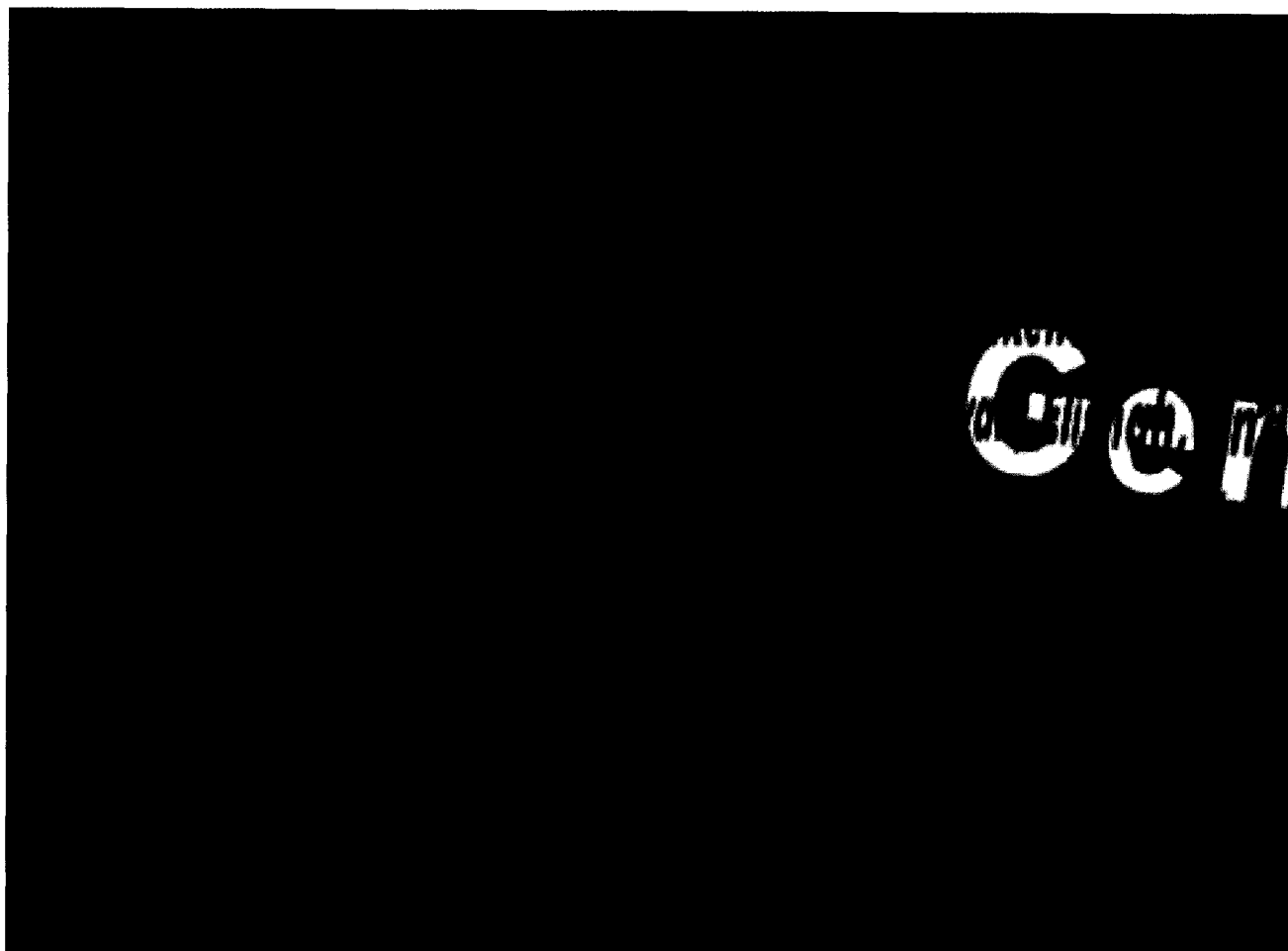
"Hurry up," the suntanned woman barked.

Mrs. Lazar shook her head in a world-weary way and flip-flopped off down the hall, flicking her ash on the floor as she went.

The suntanned woman handed me a crumpled dollar bill. "Some folks think they run the world," she said. "If you know what I mean."

"I do," I said. "I certainly do." ☞





DAVID SMALL

Navigating the Galaxies

New programs are trying to make sense of the uncodified information on the Internet

THE great problem of the information age is that there's too much information. The easier it becomes to store any kind of data on a computer or to dump material onto the Internet, the harder it can be to find what you are looking for. As more people have exchanged E-mail, joined "news-groups" and other online discussion fo-

runs, and set up their own "home pages" on the World Wide Web, the conventional wisdom has held that the computer age will be a time of decentralized, truly democratic information flow.

According to this theory, editors and, say, government censors will no longer have the ability to filter, select, or in other ways distort the news, because any citizen with

a computer and a modem will be able to prowl through the Internet's vast data troves and find the truth.

Computers are obviously changing the way people communicate, and giving us online friends and colleagues we have never met. Yet for the time being they seem to be making editors and other data-winnowers more rather than less important. Precisely because no one can keep up with all the discussion groups, all the new Web sites, and all the online libraries, people who will do preliminary screening and point others toward promising sites have an increasingly valuable service to sell. Already the Internet teems with recommendations for "hot lists" and "cool sites" and digests of the best postings from various bulletin boards. The most

A demonstration at MIT's Visual Language Workshop of three-dimensional space used to organize a large quantity of information—such as the Bible

popular online discussion forums tend to be not purely democratic but quasi-authoritarian in spirit, with an active "Sys-op" (systems operator) who both steers and stimulates debate.

The people performing such functions will not be quite like traditional print editors—mainly because the act of reading on the Internet seems destined to remain very different from reading a printed page. Reading from even the nicest computer screen is so unpleasant—and the expectation is so strong that the computer will always be doing something more active than just displaying text—that computers will remain better suited to jumping from topic to topic than to the sustained intellectual, artistic, or emotional experience that print can provide. People can read books by the hour; it is hard to imagine anyone's spending even ten minutes straight reading a single document on a computer screen. Yet while editing standards for the screen may differ from those for print, the basic editorial functions of selecting, highlighting, and ordering remain important in the Web world.

THE natural impulse of the computer culture is to look for ways to automate everything. Software designers are now working on systems that might automatically edit the material that is being abundantly and automatically propagated. In an article in last month's issue of this magazine ("The Java Theory") I discussed two computerized systems that can under certain circumstances be tremendously effective in finding data: the electronic version of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the Lexis-Nexis database. Each has made the most of an unusual advantage. The *Britannica's* edge is its pre-existing *Propaedia*, a conceptual index to the encyclopedia's full contents. The *Propaedia* makes it possible for electronic searching programs to look not just for specific names or phrases in the *Britannica* but for discussions of broad themes. Lexis-Nexis has the advantage of standardization. With transcripts of many newspaper and magazine articles, wire-service stories, and broadcast news programs that reach back as far as the early 1980s, all collected in one computer system, Lexis-Nexis allows researchers to find information even when they don't know where it originally appeared.

The conditions that allow these two systems to work—a sophisticated index in the *Britannica's* case, a centralized data collection for Lexis-Nexis—are conspicuously absent elsewhere on the Internet. Last December the Digital Equipment Corporation unveiled its Alta Vista search system (found at <http://www.altavista.digital.com>), which searches for Web pages containing particular phrases or names far more quickly than other search systems such as Yahoo and Web-Crawler. But to use even the ultra-high-speed Alta Vista effectively you must know what you are looking for before you start. The response to a general query, about an idea or trend, may point toward hundreds of Web sites with no indication of which really has the data you want.

Recently, at two laboratories near Boston, I saw projects that were designed to cope with the Internet's limitations and ultimately to make online data less of a gimmick and more of a tool. One location was the famed Media Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, founded in the mid-1980s and since then the object of both admiration and suspicion in the computer business. The admiration has been for the glamour of the lab's projects and the success of its director, Nicholas Negroponte, in attracting both money and press attention. The suspicion concerns whether the lab's self-consciously "visionary" projects will turn out to have practical, profitable uses in the long run—and if they do, where the profits will go.

In the back of everyone's mind is the nightmare example of the Xerox PARC lab in Palo Alto. Through the 1970s Xerox PARC generated some of the most influential ideas in computing, but almost none of them did Xerox any good. For example, the concepts of the computer mouse and the graphical interface, now nearly universal because of their application first in Apple products and then in Windows, came from the Xerox lab but enriched other companies.

I have no idea whether the tricks I saw when guided around the Media Lab by a researcher named David Small will ever make it to market. For example, Small demonstrated a work in progress that could be thought of as a very elaborate way to avoid carrying business cards, or as an exploration of futuristic ways to transmit information. This project, direct-

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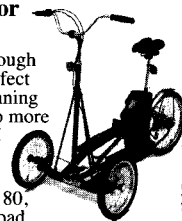
Rules: No purchase necessary. Print your name, address, and solution to the Puzzler Contest on a postcard. Mail entry to: The Atlantic Monthly, Puzzler Contest, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116. You must solve the April Puzzler correctly to be eligible to win. Entries must be received by The Atlantic no later than 12:00 P.M. on 4/15/96. One entry per person. One prize of a Zingerman's gift certificate (retail value \$150.00), will be awarded based on a random drawing from among correct entries. Contest is open to residents of the U.S. and Canada, except the Province of Quebec, and is subject to complete rules. For complete rules, send a SASE to: The Atlantic Monthly at the above address.

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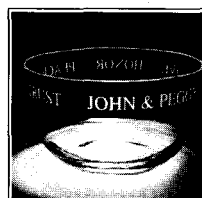
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ed by MIT's Neil Gershenfeld, uses shoes as computers and the human body as a network. Data could be stored in computer chips in your shoes, and could travel to your fingertips through your body, which can carry a small current. When you shook someone's hand, it would be like making a modem connection: the computers in people's shoes could swap basic information—fax number, E-mail address—with one another. HmMMM.

Small, an MIT graduate student who was wearing a T-shirt reading THINK SMALL, works much of the time in a warehouselike room lit only by the glow of computer screens—"to keep up my sallow complexion" (for a glimpse, see his Web site at <http://www.media.mit.edu/~dsmall>). His main work area is a two-by-five-foot Lego board covered with elaborate Lego structures. When he picked up a Lego plane, complete with propeller, and started flying it *zoom, zoom*, in the fashion of a four-year-old, my worries about the commercial prospects of the Media Lab increased. In fact the plane was the housing for an advanced and expensive position-sensing device, and as Small moved it, a large computer screen showed the "world" (that is, the Lego structures) as it appeared from the vantage point of the plane's nose.

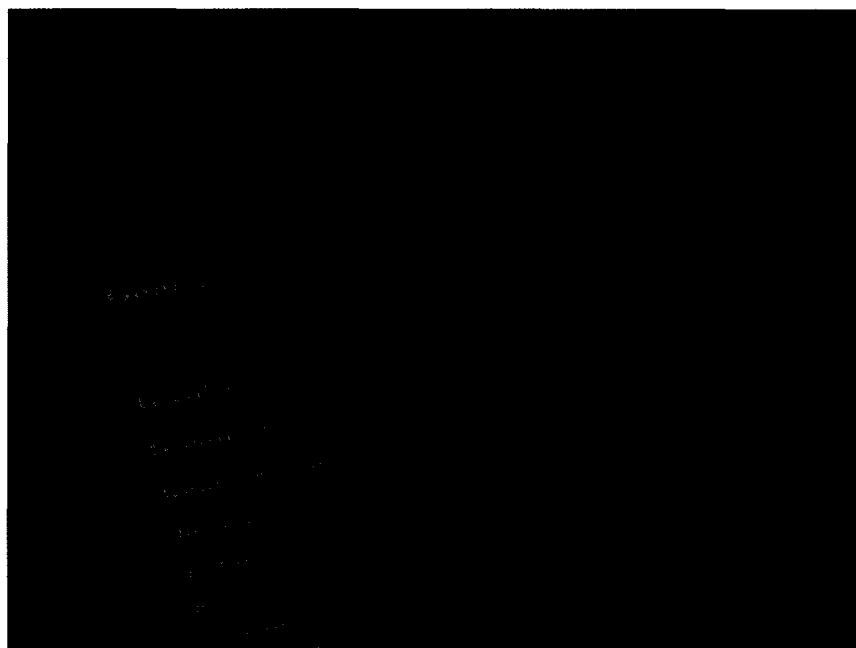
To my eye, the most enticing toys at the Media Lab were the products of the Visible Language Workshop Project, of which Small's Lego apparatus was just one example. The Visible Language Project was created by Muriel Cooper, an MIT graphic designer turned computer expert who was highly influential at the lab until her death in 1994. Under her direction researchers attempted to use computer graphics not as a substitute for text (the Macintosh-Windows approach) but as a way of making text more meaningful. This can be seen as merely an extension of the centuries-old evolution of typography, in which varying fonts and type sizes enhance the meaning of printed words. Yet the tools of modern computing can make it look like a major evolutionary leap.

The dozen or so examples Small and his colleague Brygg Ullmer showed me were all intriguing, including Small's own project allowing users to cruise through the complete works of Shakespeare—or the Bible, or other vast texts—as if they

were piloting a spaceship through a galaxy. Two projects in particular made me wish that I were a venture capitalist who could put them into effect. One, conceived by Earl Rennison, is called the Galaxy of News. It starts out on the computer screen with what looks like a view of several distant nebulae. As you use the mouse to move closer to these star clusters, they turn out to be large subject areas—government, sports, entertainment, and so on. As you near one of these areas,

board, and then the articles you're looking for. Again, this may sound obtrusive, but I can imagine using it for research.

THESE and other Visible Language products are all exploring how to display information. The idea is that some automatic indexing system will sort and link articles, assigning them to the right galaxy or billboard area. The need for such a product might seem to bring us back to the original problem of



DAVID SMALL

tiny rays appear, leading to subtopics—local politics, national politics, foreign affairs, and so on. The farther you move in any direction, the more refined the topics become, until at last the rays lead to a variety of headlines from relevant articles. This may sound unendurably gimmicky—and the whole experience was reminiscent of a *Star Trek* scene. But speaking as one who has bragged about being skeptical of graphics and preferring just words, I found this enhancement powerful and natural—much quicker to make sense of, for example, than a long list of article titles produced by a Nexis search.

A less flamboyant but equally appealing system was Highway News, created by a woman named Yin Yin Wong. As you look at your computer screen, you seem to be flying at low altitude above a flat midwestern plain marked with billboards announcing different topics—sports, corporate news, and so on. If you descend to get a closer look, you can see the names of subtopics behind each bill-

board—the Internet—that its information, unlike that of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, is not already indexed. I prefer to think that it leads instead to the East Coast laboratories of Sun Microsystems, in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, where an ambitious project to create an automatic "conceptual indexer" is under way.

The principal investigator of Sun's indexing project, William Woods, has worked for nearly thirty years in the realm where mathematics, formal logic, and linguistics intersect. People from each of these disciplines have attempted to create abstract models of how human language works, along with specific models of the structural and semantic quirks of specific languages. The goal has generally been to create "expert systems" that can mimic human understanding in fields ranging from petroleum geology to the interpretation of x-rays. In addition, this research has been applied in "natural-language interfaces"—which would, for example, al-

low you to ask a computer, "How much tax do I owe this year?" and have it calculate the answer.

Natural-language systems, as a rule, don't work well. You have to learn to talk like a computer if you want them to understand you; if you slip into the gap-py, unpredictable style that real people use when they speak, the computer gets confused. The classic illustration of the tangles of real language is the Groucho Marx line "Time flies like an arrow, but fruit flies like a banana."

Rather than attempting to create a full natural-language system, the Sun indexing project has attempted to develop a computer program "smart" enough to categorize new information it encounters. One of the project's fundamental concepts is that the words in the English language (and the things or ideas they represent) fit together in a "kind of" relationship: a salmon is a kind of fish, a fish is a kind of animal, and an animal is a kind of living thing. Therefore, when a computer found the word "salmon" in a passage, it would know for indexing purposes that the passage concerned not just salmon but also fish, animals, and living things.

It would take hundreds of thousands of such hierarchical rules to account for the meanings in the English language, with its notorious ambiguities and nuances. Yet Woods says that his team at Sun has found that they can produce a useful indexer with a relatively smaller number of such facts. A recent version of their system contained 34,000 individual "kind of" relationships. Apart from tracing the hierarchies themselves, the team's work has involved countless fine-tuning steps—for instance, helping the indexer to recognize that although "intend" is related to "mean," and "mean" is related to "cruel," "intend" and "cruel" are not related terms. Similarly, the system must be ready to distinguish between "standard" as an adjective meaning "normal" and "standard" as a noun meaning "criterion" or even "flag." It has rules for boiling down words to their root meanings, and for recognizing how those meanings are changed by prefixes like "un-" and "dis-" or suffixes like "-able" and "-ent." And on and on.

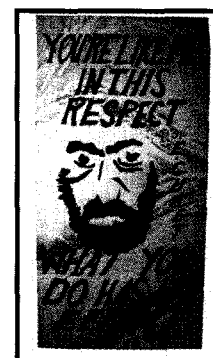
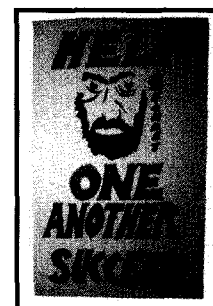
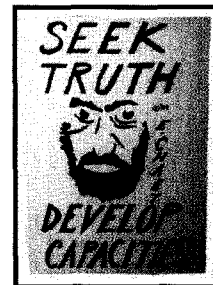
On and on might seem to stretch toward infinity: the program requires rules to allow for special cases and then rules

to offset the errors those produce. Indeed, when I tried a working model of the system in Sun's offices, half a dozen glitches showed up in ten minutes. Several dozen magazine articles and radio transcripts by one writer had been fed into the machine, which had then attempted to index individual sentences for their meaning. A few mistakes were obvious. It indexed several references to South America, but it had never been taught that Brazil belonged in that category. It listed a number of references to foodstuffs, with the frequently occurring subcategory "ale." Since I had written the articles in question and didn't remember ever mentioning ale, I went to the sentences involved and found that they all contained the word "reality." The program was smart enough to know that "ale" was a kind of food, that "re-" was a prefix, and that "-ity" was a suffix for root words ending in *e*, but no one had ever told it that "reality" is not something you can drink.

Still, these were exceptions. I was less impressed by the failures than by how many sensible judgments the indexing system had made. Unlike computerized systems for translating one language into another, which often produce gibberish or ridiculous sentences, when the indexer failed it failed gracefully. It gave a number of clues for finding information, so that if one was misleading, the others would get me there. At all times it let me observe and second-guess the structure of its logic. If I was looking for references to "aphasia," which it considered a kind of speech problem, it would show me references to discussions of other kinds of speech problems, in case these had information I sought.

"When will this be ready?" I asked eagerly after my test drive. Wood and his associates looked uneasily at one another and said, "Soon, we hope." When I asked whether I would eventually be able to run the system on my home machine, they laughed at me. One said, "We can barely make it run on ours"—a supercruiser-style Sun workstation. Then I realized that this system, like the Visible Language Workshop entertainments, doesn't have to fit on your home machine. It was meant to be applied to the data resources of the Internet, giving us a way to survey, map, and settle that frontier. ☯

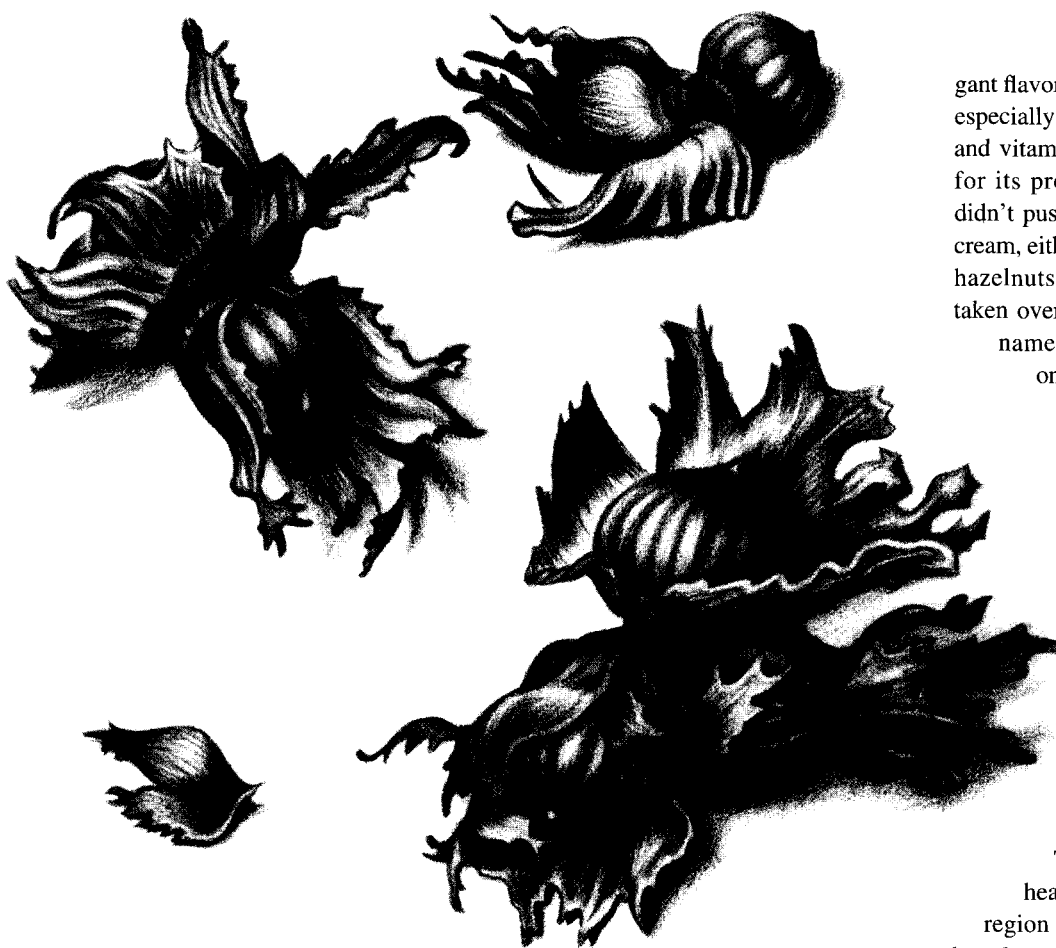
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Nuts I Love

*The great hazelnut becomes yet greater
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I'VE never wondered why practically anything that is delicious toasted is called "nutty." The natural sugars and fats in nuts when heated provide the definitive taste of caramelization, against which seemingly everything else cooked with dry heat—even meat—is compared. Vegetarians, of course, often use nuts as meat surrogates, for their high protein content. But their high fat content has made them seem a poor choice for the weight-conscious.

I recently heard welcome news at a conference on nuts and legumes conducted by Oldways Preservation & Exchange Trust, where a series of respected nutritionists and weight researchers heartily

endorsed nuts as an everyday part of the diet. The fats in nuts are mostly monounsaturated, the kind now in favor for their cholesterol-curbing properties. And in several trials people who ate even as much as half a cup of nuts every day in place of other fats not only improved their blood-cholesterol levels but reported that they felt sated and thus less tempted to overeat. Also, the subjects did not gain weight.

I didn't press the assembled experts to bless what is probably confectionary's finest marriage: hazelnuts and chocolate. I'd already heard other good news about hazelnuts, which to my mind have, along with pecans, the most distinctive and ele-

gant flavor. Among all nuts hazelnuts are especially high in monounsaturated fats and vitamin E, currently much in favor for its properties as an antioxidant. I didn't push my luck by bringing up ice cream, either, whose finest forms include hazelnuts. ("Hazelnut" seems to have taken over from "filbert" as the general name. The difference was always only etymological; "filbert" probably derives from the French Saint-Philibert, whose feast day falls in late August, a few weeks before the nut's harvest; "hazelnut" is an Anglo-Saxon word.)

In the past year I have conducted a worldwide hazelnut hunt, prompted by my desire to duplicate a kind of biscotti unlike all others I've tasted in Italy.

The best hazelnuts, I had heard, grow in the Piedmont, the region in the northwest of Italy that has always been the country's chocolate-making capital and is the home of *giandua*, the ingot-shaped chocolate-hazelnut candy. But I needed different nuts for these biscotti, which are called *tozzetti* for their squat (*tozzo*), thumblike shape, and which are softer than the usual biscotti, because they include olive oil (and lard, if the baker knows the farmer who killed the pig). The cookies are native to a more southerly region that produces hazelnuts—the part of Lazio around Viterbo, north of Rome, where a friend's mother makes them every year after her family harvests the nuts in their small orchard.

I found a grower in Lazio, Carlo Torre, who is eager to export to America and who agreed to send me samples. For comparison I obtained Piedmont hazelnuts from the one U.S. importer who sells them. At local shops I bought hazelnuts from Oregon and Turkey, the two kinds commonly available here. Then I got serious, calling botanists in several countries to learn more about why the nuts I tried tasted so different from one another. By this time I was gearing up for my annual flourless baking at Passover,

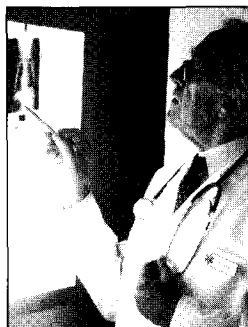
by Corby Kummer

for which I always buy quantities of nuts. I also buy chocolates for friends who celebrate Easter, and the best chocolates rely on hazelnuts to complete their flavor.

Like many matches that in retrospect seem destined, the combination of hazelnuts and chocolate was a result of accident—wartime shortages. At the start of the nineteenth century, naval blockades imposed by the English against Napoleon reduced the supply of cacao arriving from the Americas. The chocolatiers of the Piedmont, which was under French occupation, used roasted and ground hazelnuts to extend their short supplies of cocoa solids. In the 1860s the company Caffarel, which still exists, wrapped the candies in gold or silver paper and gave them the name of a popular local marionette character, Giandoja, known for his merry gluttony. Their slim flatiron shape is said to recall the puppet's cap, but it was probably adopted out of practicality—the paste is too viscous to be molded in any detail. Now every Italian chocolatier produces what have become known generically as gianduotti. Few labels bear the character's mask anymore, as the originals did, but the shape and the foil wrapping remain.

Today the world celebrates the marriage by eating Nutella, a chocolate-hazelnut spread that has become something of a mania in Italy, where children use it as frequently as we use peanut butter, and that has caught on in the United States, too. The brothers Ferrero began making the spread immediately after the Second World War, probably in response to renewed shortages of cocoa solids: the kilogram loaves in which Nutella was originally sold cost a quarter as much as the same weight of chocolate. Ferrero also had great success with its gold-wrapped chopped-hazelnut-and-chocolate "rock" (Rocher), similar to the famous silver-wrapped "kisses" (Baci) from the rival company Perugina. (Nothing, to my mind, rivals the star-strewn charm of the Baci wrapper, which encloses little sentimental messages in the spirit of those on pastel-colored candy hearts.) Ferrero says that today worldwide sales of Nutella exceed those of all brands of peanut butter combined, which to me seems only natural. Mars, unsurprisingly, has begun selling its own hazelnut-chocolate spread, named for its Milky Way bar; the dense brown-and-white cream comes striated.

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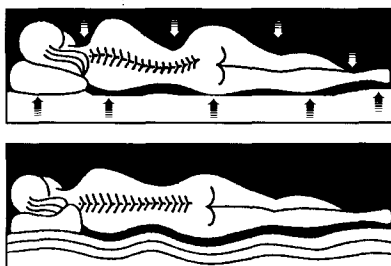
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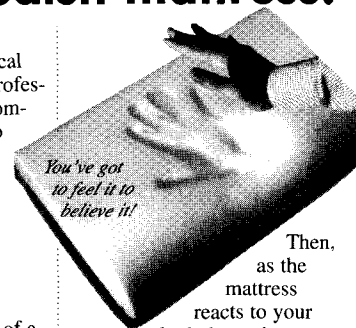
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LAST Christmas I had a chance to visit the family orchard that supplies the nuts for those irresistible *tozzetti* my friend's mother makes. I was surprised at how small a hazelnut tree, a member of the birch family, is—like a modest lilac. The trunks are seldom thicker than a forearm (U.S. trees are much larger), and the wood is said to be excellent for shepherd's sticks, because it doesn't splinter. There were still nuts on the trees, each tightly clustered with two or three distinctly lobed leaves, which are technically husks. The clusters look like beaten-gold oak leaves and acorns in Greek jewelry; I expect Martha Stewart to be gilding them soon.

The ground beneath the trees had been carefully cleared, because hazelnuts are collected after they fall. (Large growers use machines that catch the nuts in canvas hammocks.) In late August and early September, a few weeks before the nuts are ripe, the ground is raked—or, in recent times, sprayed with herbicides. Because hazelnuts grow best on hills near water, the use of herbicides has resulted in polluted aquifers, especially in the area around Viterbo; pollution and the need to return to older methods of clearing the land are currently much discussed.

In my taste comparisons I understood why Piedmont hazelnuts have retained their reputation. The flavor of Viterbese hazelnuts is very fine, but that of Piedmont nuts is more intense. Also, the skins of Piedmont nuts come off more easily after heating (skin adheres more or less tightly by variety), something that is crucial for candymakers who want to use whole nuts.

Any home baker knows how tedious it is to skin hazelnuts—an essential task, because the skins are high in astringent tannins. The usual trick is to enclose the roasted nuts in a clean dish towel and rub them together vigorously, which will remove most but not all of the skin. Another technique is to boil the nuts with a bit of baking soda in the water, which evidently loosens the skins enough so that you can rinse them off, but then you have to wait for the waterlogged nuts to dry thoroughly, or else roast them longer and with special care. The pastry chef and teacher Jim Dodge, of the New England Culinary Institute, instead mists hazelnuts with water before roasting

them to loosen the skins. Flo Braker, the author of several definitive books on baking, offers a skinning tip I like: freeze hazelnuts after they are roasted, she says, and the skins will flake off easily. "That way you don't keep eating them while you're rubbing off the last pieces of skin," she says. "I always used to have to roast a good third again as many as I needed, because I knew how many my husband and I would eat while they were still hot."

In my taste comparisons I also learned how easy it is to over-roast hazelnuts. Since I like toasty flavors so much, I usually think the darker the better. But the almost pungent taste of hazelnuts—which is much more assertive than the taste of almonds—is easily obliterated by a minute or two too long in the oven. Best to roast the nuts in a slow oven, 325°, for about ten minutes, just until you begin to smell them and they color very lightly.

Unfortunately, the taste I encountered more than any other was rancidity. This was a problem especially with the nuts I bought locally, because stores have a tendency to keep nuts on the shelf far too long. The oils oxidize and go rancid so quickly that the only safe place to store nuts is in the freezer. (This is why I no longer buy hazelnut oil, whose flavor I love; it has usually been pressed in France, and by the time I get it the oil has gone off completely.) You'll have far better luck if you buy unshelled nuts rather than shelled ones, because they resist oxidation longer. But then, of course, you face the chore of both shelling and skinning the nuts.

I was disappointed by Oregon hazelnuts. Most are of a variety called Barcelona—handsome round nuts practically as big as macadamias and with nearly as little taste. The risk with any hazelnut is a kind of dead woody flavor along with the characteristic one. Turkish and Oregon nuts, I found, had the highest proportion of wood flavor, Piedmont the highest proportion of hazelnut flavor. You can make your own comparison, buying Oregon nuts from a local store—or mail-ordering them from a reliable company such as Gahler's Hazelnuts (800-524-8201), to ensure that

they're fresh. De Choix, a gourmet importer in New York, will sell you a four-kilo vacuum-packed bag of shelled and roasted Piedmont hazelnuts, or will tell you if a store near you sells them in smaller amounts (800-332-4649).

The Piedmont variety would probably have great difficulty growing in American soil, according to Cecil Farris, an amateur botanist I discovered through the Internet who claims to have one of the world's most diverse collections of hazelnut genetic material at his home, in Lansing, Michigan. It would quickly succumb to eastern filbert blight, he says. But Farris has worked on blight- and cold-resistant hazelnut varieties that have great flavor and loose skins, and he wouldn't mind at all if Oregon growers used them instead of Barcelona, which has "a woody old kernel and a thick, ugly shell with a kind of pubescent fuzz at the apex—it hasn't got anything I'm interested in." Farris has his eye on other wet temperate regions that he thinks would be ideal for hazelnuts: he describes the Appalachian region between Bristol, Virginia, and Knoxville, Tennessee, as a kind of latter-day Fertile Crescent, and dreams of using them like the mighty almond in Hershey bars.

HAZELNUTS are used in more than sweets, of course. The people who live in areas where they grow usually serve them as they are, with fruit, letting guests do the shelling. In the area around Naples hazelnuts are served before and not after a meal, as a complement to the local Fiano wine. Pliny the Elder described the Roman practice of grafting grapevines with hazelnut stock, to strengthen them; the wine from such vines is said to taste of hazelnuts. The Mastroberardino family, whose vineyards are in the hills near Avelino, where hazelnuts grow, make an excellent Fiano that is available in the United States.

The writer Paula Wolfert says that picada sauces used in Catalan dishes for final flavoring are thickened with toasted and pounded hazelnuts and almonds mixed with garlic and hot pepper. She recently told me that in Istanbul those who



can afford them substitute hazelnuts for walnuts in the famous Turkish dish Circassian chicken, which is scented with saffron, allspice, and red pepper (a recipe for it appears in her recent *The Cooking of the Eastern Mediterranean*).

In *Flatbreads and Flavors*, a wonderful culinary tour of the Mediterranean and Asia, Jeffrey Alford and Naomi Duguid give a simple recipe for dukka, an eastern-Mediterranean nut-and-spice dip: in a mortar and pestle or a spice grinder, finely crush a half teaspoon of black peppercorns and add a quarter teaspoon of fresh or dried thyme leaves and a teaspoon of coarse salt. Pound this together with sixteen finely chopped hazelnuts, which you can toast or not beforehand. The mixture will keep for several weeks in an airtight container; just before serving, mash the paste against the sides of a bowl to release the aromatics. The dip is good with any flatbread, particularly if it has first been dipped in olive oil, and is especially good with sesame-dusted bread rings or breadsticks.

Perhaps the ultimate way to taste the caramelized flavors of toasted nuts is actually to caramelize them, so that they are dramatically shiny and deliciously toasty. Flo Braker offers a method that is easy but requires a candy thermometer. Roast very lightly four ounces of shelled hazelnuts (about a cup) and remove the skins. In a small heavy saucepan combine three tablespoons of sugar, one tablespoon of water, and, if you have it, a one-inch piece of vanilla bean. Melt the sugar over low heat and then cook over a medium-high flame until the mixture reaches 248°. Remove the syrup from the heat, fish out the vanilla bean, and stir in the nuts. Mix well, return the pan to a medium flame, and heat until the sugar darkens (don't allow it to turn black). Off the heat stir in one teaspoon of unsalted butter, which will keep the nuts from clustering. Spread the mixture onto a baking sheet to cool, separating the nuts with a fork.

This Passover I'll be using a recipe for chocolate-hazelnut meringues, crisp around the edges and chewy inside, from my book, *The Joy of Coffee*. (The book also contains the recipe for *tozzetti*; the lard is optional.) I call them gianduia

cookies; in my mother's day they were plain chocolate kisses, named perhaps for their shape, and reserved for special occasions because of their delicacy.

Preheat the oven to 350°. On a baking sheet toast a cup of shelled hazelnuts for ten minutes or so, until they just start to scent the kitchen. Rub off the skins, trying to resist sampling.



Finely chop enough nuts to make a third of a cup. Lower the oven to 325°, place a rack in the middle, and lightly grease two baking sheets or line them with parchment paper.

In a mixer on medium speed or with an electric beater beat three large egg whites until soft peaks form (if you prefer a crisper, less chewy cookie, use four egg whites). Gradually beat in three quarters of a cup of sugar, scraping the sides of the bowl; add a teaspoon of vanilla extract and whisk just until blended. Drizzle in three ounces of semisweet chocolate, melted and cooled, and add three tablespoons of unsweetened cocoa powder. Whisk or beat at medium speed only to combine the chocolate and meringue. Using a rubber spatula, stir in the chopped and whole nuts. Drop the batter onto the baking sheets by tablespoonfuls, about two inches apart. Bake one sheet at a time for fifteen to twenty minutes, or until the cookies are firm. Let them cool completely before removing them with a spatula.

You don't have to bake to enjoy hazelnuts and chocolate. Gianduiotti made by Peyrano, the best in Turin, aren't sold in the United States at the moment, but many other kinds are. And two of my favorite U.S. chocolate makers make and will send hazelnut chocolates: Fran's, in Seattle (800-422-3726), and Richard Donnelly, in Santa Cruz, California (408-458-4214).

The rich medieval spice bread panforte combines nuts with citrus peel and honey; honey (to which I will devote my next article) and nuts is an ancient combination thought to be medicinal. The best panforte I know comes not from Italy but from the Cafe Beaujolais, in Mendocino (800-930-0443)—potent and deeply satisfying. The café makes a version using hazelnuts only, rather than the usual combination of nuts. It's a purism I advocate. ☼

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"To Work Is to Live Without Dying"

What women found irresistible about Rilke was not the effect he had on them but the effect they had on him

by Lee Siegel



LIFE OF A POET: Rainer Maria Rilke

by Ralph Freedman.
Farrar, Straus & Giroux,
600 pages, \$35.00.

At a time when numbing public discourse portrays the two sexes as though they were wearing numbered jerseys of different colors, Rainer Maria Rilke might be balm for exasperated souls. Or maybe not. More than any other modernist poet, Rilke gave ironic, tender, and sometimes despairing expression to the tumult between modern men and women.

Lovers. . . when you raise yourselves
and press
your mouths together—drink upon
drink:
strange how each of you drinks your
way past the other.

But whenever we mean one thing,
wholeheartedly,
another is right there, tugging on our
feelings. Strife
is our closest companion. Don't
lovers
constantly tread over each other's
boundaries,
after mumbled vows about space,
sustenance, and home?

Isn't it time to free ourselves, with
love,
—from the one we love, and,
trembling, endure . . . ?
For to stay is to be nowhere at all.

These verses are from his late masterpiece, the *Duino Elegies*, which Rilke completed in 1922, the literary *annus mirabilis* that saw the publication of Joyce's *Ulysses* and Eliot's *The Waste*

Land. My stab at translation yields up, I hope, a little of Rilke's muscular delicacy, his quality of being at the same time supple and ethereal, of molding abstract ideas palpably, like clay. But his poetry is troubling (that last verse is a good example), and it's troubling to us in ways that a literary modernist like Rilke would not have counted on. Behind that lies a complicated tale.

Seventy years after Rilke's death, from leukemia in Switzerland, hastened when he pricked his finger on one of his beloved roses, we live in modernism's plastic aftermath. Once, the modernists deployed dark energies of nihilism and unreason against the hated bourgeoisie; now those same energies galvanize a commercial civilization that is voraciously accommodating to nihilism and unreason. We hear modernist leitmotifs casually whistled down all the highways and byways of everyday life: the defiant exaltation of violence (a theme of Gide and Malraux); salvation through sex (D. H. Lawrence); private aesthetic pleasure as the highest value (Woolf); an ironic nihilism (Mann). We go back and try to relish modernism's extremist nose-thumbing at a depersonalizing modernity, and soon we feel as though we were celebrating the most disturbing qualities of contemporary life.

So we can't really blame Ralph Freedman, Rilke's latest biographer, for writing about his subject as if Rilke were just another infuriating narcissist who kept turning up at parties. But this account, despite Freedman's heroic attempt to weave a narrative out of the voluminous material on Rilke, is pretty dismaying.

Rilke was one of the most gifted and conscientious artists who ever lived—his motto was "To work is to live without dying." His poetry, fiction, and prose embody a search for a way to be good without God, for transcendence in a hyper-rationalized world where even death—Rilke hated hospitals and the way dying had been stripped of its terrible intimacy—was dead. And beyond all that, he was fascinating.

Born in 1875 in Prague, Rilke was until he was six or seven got up in skirts by his mother, who named him René and tried to console herself for the death of an infant daughter. By the time Rilke was ten, his disappointed romantic of a mother had left his father, a kindly but ineffectual mi-

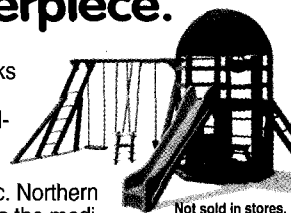
nor railway official, who had spent some years in the Austrian army unsuccessfully seeking commission as an officer. Rilke's parents decided to send the young boy to military school, a prospect that stirred the father's hopes of turning his son into a soldier. Though he later claimed to have loathed military school, the young bohemian warmly absorbed the values of discipline, valor, and self-sacrifice into his ideal of the defiant artist-hero. He skillfully foiled his father's martial expectations, and lack of funds freed the aspiring poet from his family's next plans for him: law school. In fact, though he attended several universities, soaking up lectures on diverse subjects throughout his life, he never graduated from any of them. About such a practical matter as a sheepskin, the finest German lyricist since Goethe wrote as an adolescent, "And even if I never reach my Arts degree / I'm still a scholar, as I wished to be."

W. H. Auden once remarked that would-be poets had better learn a manual trade. But Rilke was cast more in the haughty Yeatsian mold that Auden, not exactly a day laborer himself, haughtily disdained. And unlike Rilke's contemporary Franz Kafka, who performed his tasks as an insurance executive with initiative and even enthusiasm, Rilke was too frail psychologically to balance his art with the demands of full-time employment. Even a desk job in the Austrian army during the First World War, when the forty-year-old literary celebrity was conscripted, proved too much for him. After three weeks of parade-ground training and living in barracks, which nearly killed him, Rilke was assigned to the propaganda section. There his literary powers deserted him, and his frustrated superiors transferred the stunned poet to the card-filing department, where he remained for six months, until his friends interceded and got him discharged. André Malraux he was not.

Rilke's diaries and letters, lively with tales of self-dislike and depression, seem to out-Kafka Kafka himself. Still, biographers should beware of making too much of these highly polished introspections. Rilke conceived of writing as a form of prayer, as Kafka did, and he made astringent self-examination a ritualistic prelude to work. Both writers magnified their inadequacies, sometimes to the point of a vaunting self-regard; it

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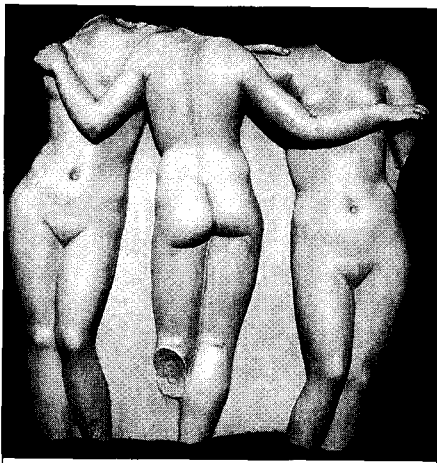
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was an efficient way to wrest from their doubts a diligent beauty of creation.

Rilke lived on the brink of poverty for much of his life, dependent on the good graces of aristocratic and haute-bourgeois patrons in the twilight of the Hapsburg Empire. His shaky situation, much as he complained of it, suited his temperament as well as did the black clothes he liked to parade in during his dandyish younger days in Prague. Like the great German mystics, Rilke was a confirmed solitary. Thus he sought to form emotional bonds with people more ardently than do those who take their desire to be with others for granted. Wandering from person to person and from place to place like a pilgrim, he found that patrons offered him, among more practical things, a potential shrine of emotional fulfillment.

Rilke spent his life wandering. From an art colony in Germany he migrated to a position as Rodin's secretary in Paris; the sculptor eventually claimed that the poet was answering letters without his permission and summarily dismissed him, as much to Rilke's relief as to his chagrin. From Berlin he made two pilgrimages to Russia to meet Tolstoy, on one trip going nearly unacknowledged because of a titanic quarrel between the count and the countess. He traveled from Italy to Vienna to Spain to Tunisia to Cairo. His restless peregrinations had their origins in his epoch, and in a temperament forced painfully to choose perfection of the life or of the work. Rilke's academic sponsor and friend was Georg Simmel, the celebrated German sociologist and philosopher of modernity. In "The Adventurer," one of his most famous essays, Simmel argued that only the experience of art or adventure could invest time with the significance once lent it by religious ritual. The work of both art and adventure had a beginning and an end; they were each an "island in life" that briefly imparted a transcendent wholeness to experience. And of all possible modern adventures, Simmel concluded, the one that most completely combined the profoundest elements of life with a momentary apprehension of what lay beyond life was the love affair.

Augustine journeyed (unhurriedly) from the fleshpots of Carthage, from being in love with love, to the love of God. Rilke, along with other adventurers on the threshold of the twentieth century, trav-

eled from God to a conviction that the only transcendent principle left was the love, erotic and spiritual, between men and women. Rilke's experience as a young boy with a feminine persona seems in this sense to have been a great boon.

First of all, it provided him with an uncanny empathy for women. His two most potent and obsessive literary images were the unrequited female lover and the woman artist struggling to find freedom and space for her work. But Rilke's liberated feminine side also gave him the gift of unabashed openness to his need and desire for the opposite sex. He recalls Kierkegaard's description of Mozart's Don Giovanni, who did not calculatedly seduce, according to Kierkegaard, but desired seductively. What women found irresistible about Rilke was not the effect he had on them but the effect they had on him.

Yet to put the burden of salvation solely on relations between men and women is to make a life between stumbling, imperfect men and women impossible. Rilke had no illusions about the nature of his erotic and romantic ideal. It flowed out from and quickly ebbed back into an unappeasable inward intensity. Rilke could not love or be loved for long, except in the absence of the beloved. After a passionate affair with the brilliant and beautiful Lou Andreas-Salomé, Rilke's muse and cicerone on his Russian trips, he suffered pangs of rejection and then happily settled into a lifelong correspondence with her. He married the sculptress Clara Westhoff when he was twenty-five, lived with her and their child for a year, and then by agreement left to take up his pilgrimage again. Through periodic reunions, but mostly through a voluminous and extraordinary correspondence, they maintained what Rilke called an "interior marriage," until emotional reality banged louder and louder on their youthful experiment and they eventually grew estranged.

Rilke seems to have passed with relief from the all-consuming rites of romance to the half communion, half self-examination of writing letters, an activity that also served as a calm precursor of his art. Not surprisingly, he was one of the greatest—and most self-conscious—letter writers who ever lived. He composed missives with a devotional purposiveness. He once wrote a poem about the

Annunciation in which the angel forgets what he has come to announce because he is overwhelmed by Mary's beauty. The implication seems to be that communicating through the mail would have been a more fruitful procedure.

Rilke loved absolutely, not strenuously or patiently, and therefore his love always froze up into a mirror of itself. His condition might have been tormented and tormenting—it might appear wearily obnoxious. But for Rilke the poet, modern men and women as lovers—their exalted expectations and their comi-tragic desperation—came to symbolize complex human fate in a world where vertiginous possibilities have replaced God and nature. In Rilke's *Elegies* especially, lovers encounter animals, trees, flowers, works of art, puppets, and angels—all images, for Rilke, of the absolute fulfillment of desire, alongside which the poet placed the tender vaudeville of imperfect human wanting. Rilke the man might have presented a painful obstruction to himself. But true ardor often springs from an essential deprivation.

RALPH Freedman gives a remarkably purposeful account of Rilke's deprivation. But he describes none of Rilke's ardor—or his honest avowals, or all the discipline and strength and health he needed to draw his life's work out of depressions, blocks, and fears, out of his contemporary-sounding struggle between a Faustian ego and an endangered self. In this biography we don't get Rilke's poetic transformations. We get only the modern condition—his and his society's—that he poetically transformed and that we've inherited.

Freedman's Rilke, oddly enough, dwells on the dark underside of contemporary American life. Behind the mingled, multicolored yarn of his passions, obsessions, powerful yearnings, and self-interest—all wisely balanced in Donald Prater's majestic and definitive 1986 biography—Freedman sees only self-interest. Rilke is "hucksterish." His carefully cultivated literary success Freedman characterizes as a "relentless career." He refers to Rilke's "careerist standards." The places Rilke settles in for a time are not homes but Rilke's "bases."

At moments Rilke's awareness of his self-interest amid modern anxieties appears uncannily precocious: "The pres-

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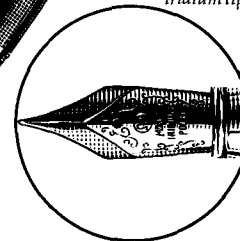
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tures even in the preschooler's life were often suffocating. He longed for change." How does Freedman know that? I presume he got it from one of the mature Rilke's self-dramatizing letters, letters that Freedman paraphrases tendentiously throughout the book. That approach has the effect of turning Rilke's harsh and vain self-explorations into evidence of the "traumas" that Rilke spent a life riddled with "failure" denying. Indeed, Freedman writes enigmatically about "Rilke's pattern of living through failure as part of a process that turns denial into poetic art." I'm not sure what that means, but it sounds like success to me.

But no—if, for Freedman, Rilke is a slick little engine of self-advancement, he is also "thin-skinned," "fragile," "depressed," "thwarted," "troubled," "distraught," "schizophrenic," and "almost suicidal," and he suffered from "hysteria," "anxiety," and "insecurity." This poet seems so tightly shackled to his inner condition that we wonder how he found the freedom to make his art. Freedman himself only occasionally glances at Rilke's art, and then with considerable lack of charm, not to say comprehension ("Still addressing the woman's genitals in confrontation with the man's, Rilke weighed in with his most devastating critique of death's dialectic").

Freedman's Rilke is an almost wholly psychologized being. He has little existence outside his leaden states of mind. We rarely hear about the rich medley of artistic and intellectual influences on him—amazingly, Simmel's "The Adventurer" never comes up. This is an extreme approach to the telling of a poet's life, but Freedman has a method to his extremism. As in a rash of recent despoiling biographies—John Fugie's life of Brecht, Michael Shelden's of Graham Greene, Ronald Hayman's of Thomas Mann, to name just three—the author shortly puts his cards on the table: in this case we are going to meet Rilke the anti-Semite, Rilke the secret homosexual, Rilke the sexist.

THE first strut of biographical art to buckle under such an avenging mission is language. "Death emasculates," Freedman reports dishearteningly. He describes one doubly unlucky fellow as being "fatally electrocuted." We find Rilke seeking the "panacea of a cure."

Women almost never give birth—they just "birth." Clara, Rilke's wife, "was the messenger but also the transparent glass and reflecting mirror of Rilke's depression." And what a shame that a sentence like this should appear in a book about a poet's life: "Like garden flowers opening their petals early only to wither quickly, Italy's current art avoided the hard surface required for effective poetry." It's as if, somewhere in the deeper regions of his writing self, Freedman knows that Rilke wasn't any of the bad things his biographer says he was.

One ugly phrase in a personal letter, for instance (out of a vast personal correspondence), referring to Franz Werfel as a "Jew-boy," and some murky generalities about Werfel's "Jewish attitude toward his work," do not an anti-Semite make. Rilke cherished the many Jews he knew, including Simmel; he enjoyed reading the Hasidic philosopher Martin Buber and steeped himself in Jewish Scripture, claiming that Judaism was closer than Christianity to God. He also remained a lifelong champion of Werfel's work. And a reader discovers buried deep in Freedman's footnotes that Rilke wrote the offending letter to the poet Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, a good friend and an important patron. Hoffmannsthal was also Jewish, and he shared Rilke's negative views on the superambitious Werfel, who emigrated to America and, in 1941, published *The Song of Bernadette*, a novel about a miracle at Lourdes. Freedman doesn't mention that about five months after Rilke wrote the letter to Hoffmannsthal, along with a nearly identical letter to his patron Princess Marie von Thurn und Taxis, Rilke again wrote similar letters to the two of them praising Werfel's poetry so exuberantly that they almost sound like retractions of his first letters.

Why would an anti-Semite extol a Jewish poet to two of the most powerful and influential figures in Central European literary culture—to his own patrons? To paraphrase that great Jewish philosopher Thomas Aquinas, When you meet a contradiction, make a distinction. But Freedman builds from the surface contradiction. For Rilke, he writes, "a cultural and sometimes even a social anti-Semitism was part of daily existence." Yet aside from the letter to Hoffmannsthal, he offers no evidence for that litigable assumption, though he

does inform us, with a smug and bizarre knowingness, that one of Rilke's Jewish lovers later died at Auschwitz.

With similarly blind zeal Freedman bases his insinuation that Rilke was secretly gay on two pieces of evidence: the poet's idealistic adolescent pact with another boy at military school, "sealed by a handshake and a kiss," as Rilke put it in a letter; and a fictional letter meant for publication, which brought Rilke, in Freedman's weasel words, "close to a disguised rendering of homosexuality with personal overtones." That's all the proof Freedman has.

Well, so what if Rilke happened to be homosexual? I don't see what Freedman thinks he is gaining by making a near-assertion and then failing to prove it. If there are readers who might be obscurely benefited by the revelation of Rilke's homosexuality, they'll be disappointed. If there are readers whose identity rests on the affirmation of Rilke's heterosexuality, they will be shaken and then cheered. If there are readers who couldn't care less about the whole matter, they'll be bored. Meanwhile, Rilke's ghost drums its fingers on some eternal windowsill, waiting patiently to be evoked.

THIS is formidable revisionism. The cumulative effect of such a distortion of truth to an admirable, if sadly misplaced, idea of redemption and redress is to make Freedman's biography read like a forced confession. But the beating heart of Freedman's interminable deconstruction is Rilke the sexist. Rilke's extraordinary sensitivity to women, his admiration and need for strong and intelligent women, women's love for Rilke—these facts Freedman brusquely mentions only to knock down. What he wants is to prove that Rilke was a spirited accomplice in European society's subjugation of women. He writes,

The women Rainer chose . . . were themselves practicing artists whose work he respected, from Clara to Loulou and now to Baladine-Merline. But they were given no choice to remove themselves for the sake of *their* art. . . . Rilke's love imposed a nonreciprocal discipline: in the end, it worked only for him and his poetry.

Throughout 600 pages Freedman gives us encounter after encounter between Rilke and the women in his life, in

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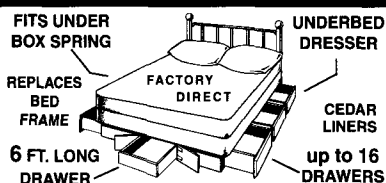
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which the women are flawless angels and Rilke a consummate villain. If Rilke's dear friend the great German painter Paula Modersohn-Becker found herself trapped in a stifling marriage, Rilke was a traitor for not extricating her. If Lou Andreas-Salomé told the young Rilke to go off somewhere because one of her other lovers was coming to visit, Rilke's anger was the symptom of an unbalanced psyche. If the adolescent Rilke broke up with his adolescent girlfriend, Valerie von David-Rhönfeld, he was a treacherous seducer. Freedman quotes copiously from David-Rhönfeld's embittered memoirs—published shortly after Rilke's death—to posit a pattern in Rilke's personality. "I came to love that poor unfortunate creature," David-Rhönfeld recalls about her teenage sweetheart, "whom everyone avoided like a mangy dog." For Freedman, this vindictive picture of Rilke provides the "clue" to Rilke's "isolation."

This is all ludicrously unfair. It's certainly unfair to say that Rilke didn't give the women he loved and who loved him the "choice to remove themselves for the sake of *their* art." He was in no position to give or deny freedom to his independent-minded wife, let alone to any woman of whom he was merely a lover. Only their passion, or admiration, or use for Rilke bound these women to the famous poet. Often ambitious artists themselves, Rilke's lovers expected him to introduce them into his heady artistic and intellectual circles and to help them with their careers. This he unfailingly did; in one case he helped the careers of a former lover's children by her husband. And he offered emotional succor long after the amorous flame had waned—not to mention demanding the same support for himself.

Rilke's most benevolent patron, Princess Marie von Thurn und Taxis, was wise enough both to nurture Rilke's gift and to keep her distance from her complicated protégé. An unblinking observer of Rilke's life, she was able to see his liaisons for what they were. And she knew how Rilke's acute sensitivity to his own condition, combined with his talent for self-pity, often landed him in the arms of the wrong people: "You must always be seeking out such weeping willows, who are by no means so weepy in reality, believe me—you find your own

reflection in those eyes." But Freedman, doggedly indifferent to the available evidence, makes Rilke's lovers and women friends out to be helpless victims of a smooth seduction machine.

As for the centerpiece of Freedman's argument for Rilke's sexism—he "abandoned" Clara and their daughter, Ruth—here he portrays Clara, too, as if she were Tess of the D'Urbervilles. On the contrary. Clara enthusiastically seconded Rilke's definition of two artists wedded as each, in Rilke's cautiously ambiguous phrase, "the guardian of the other's solitude." After Rilke left for Paris, she placed Ruth with her wealthy and supportive parents and went on a pilgrimage to Egypt, among other places. Like Rilke, the adventurous Clara had a fascinating life—I don't know why Freedman didn't write her biography. Women artists suffered in Rilke's society, but not because of Rilke.

We must understand one another or die. And we will never understand one another if we cannot understand the famous dead, those fragments of the past who sit half buried and gesturing to us on memory's contested shores. But Rilke, as a poet, should have the last word (in Stephen Mitchell's beautiful translation):

ARCHAIC TORSO OF APOLLO

We cannot know his legendary head
with eyes like ripening fruit. And
yet his torso
is still suffused with brilliance from
inside,
like a lamp, in which his gaze, now
turned to low,

gleams in all its power. Otherwise
the curved breast could not dazzle
you so, nor could
a smile run through the placid hips
and thighs
to that dark center where procreation
flared.

Otherwise this stone would seem
defaced
beneath the translucent cascade of
the shoulders
and would not glisten like a wild
beast's fur:

would not, from all the borders
of itself,
burst like a star: for here there is no
place
that does not see you. You must
change your life.

Right, Here Goes

by Scott Stossel

THERAPY

by David Lodge.
Viking, 321 pages, \$22.95.

FOR some years now literature has been under siege by "theory" in its various incarnations: deconstructionism, post-structuralism, Marxism, cultural criticism, and historicism, among other esoteric isms. Although most of the reading public continues to approach books and literature in much the same way that it has for at least a century or two, reading for plot, character, and meaning, anyone even dimly aware of the tenor of current academic literary criticism knows that literature has been cut adrift from its ontological moorings. Plot? A flimsy technical device, used to propagate consumerist cant. Character? A bourgeois myth, an illusion created to reinforce capitalist domination. Meaning? No such thing; post-structuralism has shown that owing to the nature of language, meaning is endlessly deferred along a string of signifiers. Authors? They don't exist. The author is merely an ideological construction that artificially limits the proliferation of meanings in the text. Coherent novels (or "coherent texts," in the academic vernacular) do not exist in current criticism; every text is shot through with other texts and with the seeds of its own de(con)struction.

But all this is academic nonsense to the common reader, who still reads to be entertained, enlightened, and perhaps even morally enlarged. Does "the best that has been known and thought" consist of nothing more than those works that make the most effective use of certain formal literary devices? What happened to Horace's dictum that literature should entertain and instruct? Must literature be reduced to deluding while indoctrinating (or, worse, to self-deconstructing)?

The answer to these questions is yes and no. This is nowhere better demonstrated than in the writing—both fiction

and nonfiction—of David Lodge, a sixty-one-year-old British academic who retired from the University of Birmingham in 1987. Lodge has published five books of criticism and nine novels, along with assorted other books. He straddles the worlds of academia and middlebrow fiction. In Lodge the scholar of the novel we have an academic who has gone native. And in Lodge the novelist we have, in effect, a mole: he reports in his nonfiction on the latest in novelistic technique—this while in his novels pillorying the academy's continuing campaign to create a literature for professionals only.

Lodge's novels, in both their form and their content, reflect the experience and the language of the academic. Four of them—*The British Museum Is Falling Down* (1965), *Changing Places* (1975), *Small World* (1984), and *Nice Work* (1988)—feature academics in academic settings: in them Lodge the novelist parodies the sorts of discourse he produced as Lodge the professor. In fact, some of the language in the opening paragraph of this review was pulled from *Nice Work* and *Small World*. Lodge's criticism—in books with titles like *Working With Structuralism* and *The Modes of Modern Writing*—contains both some of the opaque academic language that one expects of academic criticism today (he can definitely talk the talk) and nuggets like this one (which perhaps indicate why he took early retirement from the university):

A lot of academic literary criticism and theory . . . frankly no longer seems worth the considerable effort of keeping up with it. A vast amount of it is not . . . a contribution to human knowledge but the demonstration of professional mastery by translating known facts into more and more arcane metalanguages

—which means something coming from someone who can actually understand these metalanguages.

Lodge defends his fiction against theory's assaults by co-opting them, incorporating the assaults into his stories. He anticipates the commentary of the academic critic and puts it into the voices of his characters. Let's, the narrator of *Nice Work* says, meet

a character who, rather awkwardly for me, doesn't herself believe in the concept of character. That is to say (a

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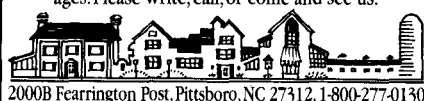
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favourite phrase of her own), Robyn Penrose, Temporary Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Rummidge, holds that "character" is a bourgeois myth, an illusion created to reinforce the ideology of capitalism.

The narrator goes on in this mode at sufficient length to become unsettling. Maybe character is an illusion. But then Robyn's views are summarily (though good-naturedly) deflated.

In practice [these views don't] seem to affect her behaviour very noticeably—she seems to have ordinary human feelings, ambitions, desires, to suffer anxieties, frustrations, fears, like anyone else in this imperfect world, and to have a natural inclination to try and make it a better place. I shall therefore take the liberty of treating her as a character.

By such touches Lodge manages to have it both ways. He constructs wonderful stories and metaphors and narrators in his novels, points out in the same novels how these stories and metaphors and narrators can all be (in the dread procedures of academic criticism) deconstructed, unpacked, or historicized, and then makes fun of this process of deconstruction.

ONLY in a Lodge novel would a professor at a conference say, after giving a speech on narratology, "No, no, my presence [here] would be superfluous . . . I have performed my narrative function for tonight." His way of telling the other characters that he's going to bed now is Lodge's way of highlighting the fictionality of his fiction.

Lodge also plays with form on a larger scale: the last chapter of *Changing Places*, for example, collapses form and content into each other. *Changing Places* tells the story of what happens when a British and an American professor exchange positions (and, as it turns out, wives) for a year. On the surface the plot is fairly conventional: it uses a simple conceit—taking two characters and dropping them into unfamiliar contexts—to great comic effect. But Lodge manipulates the structure of *Changing Places* to experiment with form, so the novel is more complex than it might seem on the surface. Each of the six chapters alternates between Philip Swallow, the British professor, and Morris

Zapp, the American (who has many of the idiosyncrasies of two prominent real-life American critics, Stanley Fish and Harold Bloom), and each chapter is written in a different style. The last chapter, called "Ending," is in the form of a screenplay. Its final lines consist of a kind of extended metafictional joke.

PHILIP: You remember that passage in *Northanger Abbey* where Jane Austen says she's afraid that her readers will have guessed that a happy ending is coming up at any moment.

MORRIS: (nods) Quote, 'Seeing in the tell-tale compression of the pages before them that we are all hastening together to perfect felicity.' Unquote.

PHILIP: That's it. Well, that's something the novelist can't help giving away, isn't it, that his book is shortly coming to an end? It may not be a happy ending nowadays, but he can't disguise the tell-tale compression of the pages. . . . I mean, mentally you brace yourself for the ending of a novel. As you're reading, you're aware of the fact that there's only a page or two left in the book, and you get ready to close it. But with a film there's no way of telling . . . There's no way of telling which frame is going to be the last. The film is going along, just as life goes along, people are behaving, doing things, drinking, talking, and we're watching them, and at any point the director chooses, without warning, without anything being resolved, or explained, or wound up, it can just . . . end.

PHILIP shrugs. The camera stops, freezing him in mid-gesture.

THE END

L ODGE'S postmodern machinations whirl and grind at a level beneath the surface of his stories—stories at times so conventional and straightforward (in a way that the flamboyantly post-modern stories of, say, John Barth or Milan Kundera are not) that they've escaped the notice of many academic critics, who place a modernist premium on inaccessibility, and wandered into the realm of popular fiction.

His best novel may be *Small World*, a send-up of the world of international academic conferences, which chronicles the haphazard comings and goings of a herd of professors (including Morris Zapp and Philip Swallow) all over the world. The novel has as its formal mod-

el the chivalric romance, in particular the Grail quest as interpreted by Jessie Weston in *From Ritual to Romance* (a book that T. S. Eliot used as a major source for *The Waste Land*). Lodge hews fairly faithfully to his chivalric analogue. The hero's name, Persse McGarrigle, is a variation on Percival, the name of the knight who in most versions of the legend undertakes the Grail quest. Arthur Kingfisher, a doyen of literary criticism, has become impotent sexually and tapped-out creatively—just as in the Grail legend the lands of the Fisher King had become dry and sterile. There are numerous plots and numerous Grails in this novel—Persse, for example, a young and innocent T. S. Eliot scholar, is questing for the woman he loves—but the Grail that most of the academics in the novel are in avid pursuit of is a new chair of literary criticism, which comes with the highest salary in the profession, tax-free, and which can be occupied wherever its possessor wishes to reside. Kingfisher chooses the chair's occupant when Persse, like Percival, asks the appropriate question—one that cuts brutally to the heart of what academic literary studies are about.

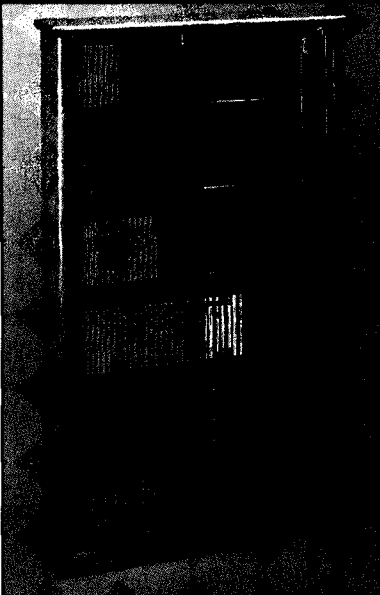
While the Grail quest provides the structural skeleton around which *Small World* is built, numerous other models and allusions and formal games dance at the edges of the text. Lodge uses these allusions and formal tricks ("intertextuality," in the jargon) throughout to deepen the meaning of the story by lending it mythic resonance and at the same time to sharpen its satire: giving mythic status to the petty ambitions of these careerist academics highlights their absurdity. Lodge also uses his formal games to point out the fictionality of his conceit. When he has a character describe the genre of romance as "a pre-novelistic kind of narrative. . . . full of adventure and coincidence and surprises and marvels . . . [and] lots of characters who are lost or enchanted or wandering about looking for each other, or for the Grail, or something like that," he is doing what he has called in his critical writings (borrowing from the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin) "baring of the device": he is having the character describe the fictional conventions on which her reality—the reality of *Small World*—is based.

LODGE'S humor and wit have earned him his reputation as a comic novelist. His novels, especially those published after *Small World*, have done well, both popularly and critically. *Paradise News* (1991), for example, his next-to-most-recent novel, spent a considerable amount of time on British best-seller lists, out-selling Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park* in 1992. Both *Small World* and *Nice Work* were turned into popular and acclaimed television programs in England. Graham Greene declared himself a David Lodge fan after the publication of Lodge's early novels (which were swollen with bile toward the Catholic Church), and Anthony Burgess in 1984 ranked *How Far Can You Go?* (1980) as one of the best novels published since the beginning of the Second World War. Lodge has also been short-listed twice (for *Small World* and *Nice Work*) for the Booker Prize.

But he has never actually won the Booker (in 1984 *Small World* lost out to Anita Brookner's *Hotel du Lac*; in 1988 *Oscar and Lucinda*, by Peter Carey, beat *Nice Work*). Has he been runner-up for the award because he's good but, in the end, not *that* good? Or is it because, as a comic novelist, he's not accorded the same respect as "serious" novelists? Woody Allen has said that comics don't get to eat at the grown-ups' table and that this has affected the reception of his films. Might a similar syndrome have affected Lodge's critical reception? Or is it accurate to say, as the British newspaper *The Guardian* has, that "ultimately, Lodge's comic view of life is sustainable only because it doesn't dig very deep"? Some of Lodge's novels end, certainly, like Shakespearean comedies, with couples improbably reuniting. But Lodge also uses the comic to gesture meaningfully at the weighty and profound.

Take *Paradise News*. At the end of the first chapter the novel's hero, the skeptical theologian Bernard Walsh, muses that "there was, after all, something incongruous, even indecent, about using a package holiday to visit a dying relative"—the package holiday being a trip to Hawaii. A priest who has lost his faith, Bernard has been living a drab, Spartan life, teaching theology at a small college. As he helps and comforts his ailing aunt, Ursula, and enters a relationship with Yolande Miller (whose discordant name, in "yoking together the exotic and the

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banal," typifies the novel's incongruities), who has hit and injured his father with her car, he begins to discover how resourceful he is, and to become aware of life's manifold possibilities.

Lodge explores the meaning of Bernard's progress in a theology lecture that Bernard delivers at the end of the novel. What can be salvaged from the "eschatological wreckage" of traditional religious faith? Bernard asks. In many ways this is what *Paradise News* is about. Religious awe at earthly things and at earthly pleasures, and the wonder that attends the "uncertainty" of the existence of God, fill the void left by the discrediting of traditional Christian dogma. (*Paradise News* is also, of course, about interpretation, and about the impossibility, after post-structuralism, of a literary text's having an absolute meaning.) Bernard finds a kind of modest paradise in these wonders, and he prefers them to the guarantee of heaven. Whereas Milton undertook in *Paradise Lost* to justify the ways of God to man, *Paradise News*, though it winks slyly at Milton, shows how our helping and caring for one another will be rewarded in a world where we cannot even be sure that God has ways. One hopes this view of life can be sustained outside the comic novel.

STILL, if happy endings belong fundamentally to the comic genre, then *Paradise News* falls into that category. But in Lodge's latest novel, *Therapy*, which is soon to be published in paperback, the comic view of life is tempered considerably.

Therapy's hero, Laurence Passmore, known to most as Tubby, is somewhat fat, more than somewhat balding, and fifty-eight. He is married to Sally, a linguist, and he has two grown children. He is the writer of a successful sitcom called *The People Next Door*, which has been running for five years and is watched by 13 million people each week. This show has yielded Tubby a small amount of fame and a large amount of money. Tubby also has a mistress—albeit a platonic one—named Amy.

Tubby believes he should be happy: "So really you would say that I've got it made, wouldn't you? I've solved the monogamy problem, which is to say the monotony problem, without the guilt of infidelity. I have a sexy wife at home

and a platonic mistress in London. What have I got to complain about? I don't know." He doesn't know. That's just the problem. In addition to a real and nagging physical ailment, a recurrent sharp pain in his knee, Tubby is plagued by a malaise of uncertain origins. He doesn't suffer from nightmares, but

nightmares are about the only thing I don't have, in that line. I have depression, anxiety, panic attacks, night sweats, insomnia, but not nightmares. . . . [If I did have nightmares] maybe I would get a clue then to what's the matter with me. I don't mean my knee. I mean my head. My mind. My soul.

Nearly all Lodge's heroes have some sort of obvious weakness or shortcoming that becomes almost a defining characteristic: they are short (Victor Wilcox in *Nice Work*), fat (Tubby), lapsed priests (Bernard in *Paradise News*), sexually bumbling (Persse in *Small World* and the entire cast of characters in *How Far Can You Go?*), or just plain benignly ineffectual (Philip Swallow in *Changing Places*, Adam Appleby in *The British Museum Is Falling Down*). It is as though Lodge, who in his earlier novels was somewhat angrily trying to address the frustrating proscriptions of the Catholic Church through comedy, has abandoned the specific tenets of Catholicism while retaining at least one of its basic moral principles for his artistic vision: The meek shall inherit the earth. These short, fat, bumbling characters usually end up okay, often even better off than they were at the beginning.

Much of Lodge's comedy stems from the amplification in his characters of our deepest insecurities: about sex, about our appearance, about our place in the world. Woody Allen similarly zeroes in on basic human insecurities. But Lodge's touch is lighter than Allen's, even in *Therapy*, which has Allenesque existential preoccupations. Here, in a scene told from the point of view of Amy, Tubby makes his first attempt at compensating for "lost philandering" after his wife has left him.

Well, it was lucky I was [drunk], otherwise it would have been just too embarrassing for words. . . . I got the giggles as soon as I saw Laurence putting on his knee-support when we were preparing for our *siesta*. It's made from some spongy stretch fabric, like they use to make wet-suits,

and it's bright red, with a hole in it for his kneecap to poke through. It looked particularly funny when he had nothing else on. . . . Apparently he always wears it when he and Sally have sex. When he put on an elasticated elbow bandage as well I nearly had hysterics. He explained that he'd had a recurrence of tennis elbow lately and didn't want to take any chances. I wondered if he was going to put on anything else, a pair of shin-pads perhaps, or a cycling helmet. Actually, that wouldn't have been a bad idea, because the bed was so narrow he was in some danger of falling on the floor during foreplay . . . I felt like a cross between a hooker and an orthopaedic nurse.

Lodge mines the endless array of sexual foibles to extract laughter and sanity. The humor in this passage bears one of Lodge's trademarks: it is funny at his characters' expense without sacrificing the warmth and empathy the reader feels for them.

Therapy doesn't scale the heights of comedy the way some of Lodge's earlier novels did. This may be because Lodge is most in his element in comic writing about being an academic and being a Catholic. Indeed, Lodge's first comic novel, *The British Museum Is Falling Down*, was about a Catholic academic. Thinking about how easy sexual life must be for non-Catholics, Adam Appleby, who is a poor graduate student with three children already, marvels,

How different from his own married state, which Adam symbolised as a small, over-populated, low-lying island ringed by a crumbling dyke which he and his wife struggled hopelessly to repair as they kept anxious watch on the surging sea of fertility that surrounded them.

His wife keeps getting pregnant, despite the couple's best efforts at Catholicism's version of birth control.

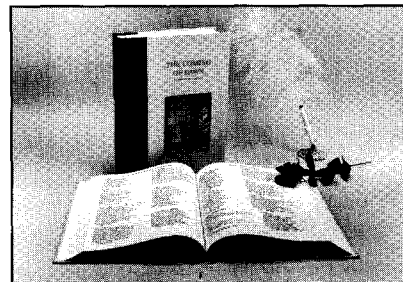
They had embarked on marriage with vague notions about the Safe Period and a hopeful trust in Providence that Adam now found difficult to credit. Clare had been born nine months after the wedding. Barbara had then consulted a Catholic doctor who gave her a simple mathematical formula for calculating the Safe Period—so simple that Dominic was born one year after Clare.

When a fellow graduate student accuses Adam of suffering from a special form of scholarly neurosis, the inability to distinguish between life and literature, Adam retorts, "Oh yes I can. Literature is mostly about having sex and not much about having children. Life is the other way round." *The British Museum Is Falling Down* lacks the weight and formal neatness of Lodge's later novels, but it demonstrates his droll humor and his ability to make us simultaneously laugh at and feel for his characters.

THERE'S no question that in *Therapy*, superficially a conventional entertainment, Lodge is up to his old playful gamesmanship, at the same time baring and concealing the devices that make his fiction work. Consider even his choice of title. Who exactly is this therapy for? That is, what is the title referring to? All the therapy that Tubby ("On Mondays I see Roland for Physiotherapy, on Tuesdays I see Alexandra for Cognitive Behavior Therapy, and on Fridays I have either aromatherapy or acupuncture. Wednesdays and Thursdays I'm usually in London, but then I see Amy, which is a sort of therapy too, I suppose") and the other characters in the novel receive? No doubt. But is Lodge also offering therapy to us? Probably that, too. After all, the novel's somewhat sad ending is clearly intended to make us feel better about what Tubby, in talking about the therapeutic social effect he presumes his sitcom to have on viewers, calls our "negative equity." Finally, maybe, just maybe, is this novel therapy for Lodge? Though it is extremely unfashionable, now that authors are not supposed even to exist, to look in novels for autobiographical clues, I find it distinctly possible that the novel represents a kind of extemporized writing therapy or journal writing, meant to assuage his own midlife angst. (Lodge recently told an interviewer, "In middle age, I've found myself prone to more depression and anxiety than I can give a rational explanation for.") Consider the novel's epigram, from Graham Greene: "Writing is a form of therapy." Consider also the extract from the journal of Søren Kierkegaard that Tubby quotes approvingly: "Only when I write do I feel well." Still more suggestive, however, is the first line of the novel. It comes before Tub-

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by's entry dated February 15, 1993, and it reads "Right, here goes." Is this Tubby getting ready to write his diary? Or is it Lodge getting ready to improvise Tubby's diary? Now combine all this with the way that Tubby describes the pigeons outside his window in his first diary entry: "Pure play—no question. They were just larking about, exercising their agility for the sheer fun of it." Right away, on page one, Lodge has us wondering, Is this what *he* is going to do? Is this novel just writing for the sake of writing, writing for the sake of therapy? How else would you begin such an exercise but by saying to yourself, "Right, here goes"?

One final piece of evidence: at the beginning of the novel's concluding section Tubby muses about the distinctions among writing a novel, writing a script, and writing a journal. The essential difference, he explains, in a passage that recalls the end of *Changing Places*, is "a question of tense." Whereas a script is all in the present tense, happening *now*, when you write something in a book it appears to be all in the past.

Even if you write, "*I am writing, I am writing*," over and over again, the act of writing is finished with, out of sight, by the time somebody reads the result. . . . The special thing about a journal is that the writer doesn't know where his story is going, he doesn't know how it ends; so it seems to exist in a kind of continuous present, even though the individual incidents may be described in the past tense. Novels are written after the fact, or they pretend to be. The novelist may not have known how his story would end when he began it, but it always *looks* as if he did to the reader.

This is an obvious point, really, but by highlighting its own mechanism, it casts the novel in a new light. Is *Therapy*, then, just Lodge's fancy way of saying "*I am writing, I am writing*"? His way of diverting himself from whatever demons plague him? Who is the author of this diary entry, Tubby or Lodge? Obviously, both are. Tubby in this passage points out that this is his journal; he couldn't possibly have known where his life was going next as he wrote it. Lodge, however, is the novelist. He knew where Tubby's life was going all along. Or did he?

Reading Lodge's critical writing on fiction produces the disconcerting feel-

ing of being allowed a peek at the bricks and mortar, the sweat and craftsmanship, that go into the creation of a literary work. Perhaps you would rather not know how it came to be; you would prefer to entertain the illusion that it appeared on the earthly plane fully formed. In that case, when Lodge the novelist pulls back the curtain to reveal the scaffolding and lighting devices in his fiction as you're reading it, you would probably just as soon close your eyes and pretend that you haven't noticed. But you would be missing out: Lodge is simultaneously a playfully postmodern and a plainly conventional

comic novelist, and that, along with his intermingling of form and content, is what makes him such an interesting writer. Besides, it is reassuring to read the novels of an academic who still believes in character, in storytelling, and in meaning. And seeing a novel broken down into its component parts should not be alarming, because in the end, as Lodge has written, "a novel is a *Gestalt* . . . a perceptual pattern or structure possessing qualities as a whole that cannot be described merely as the sum of its parts." Literature *is* far more than an aggregation of technical devices. Even if that's just what it is. ☞

BRIEF REVIEWS



Jerzy Kosinski

by James Park Sloan.

Dutton, 505 pages, \$27.95.

Jerzy Kosinski was a recent immigrant to the United States when his first novel, *The Painted Bird*, was widely praised and became a virtual cult item among undergraduate readers. His second, *Steps*, won the National Book Award. Both, like his subsequent novels, were based on childish fantasies of power and revenge expanded to incorporate an adult understanding of sex and money. From a rigidly literal viewpoint, Kosinski was a chronic liar. He had been trained to lie as a small boy while his Jewish parents (their real name was Lewinkopf) evaded Nazi destruction by masquerading as Christians in a small Polish town, and Mr. Sloan attributes his subject's later preoccupation with questions of identity, privacy, and secrecy to that early experience. Kosinski's literary distinction led to connections in influential circles, where he was respected as a man of wit, charm, and genius . . . and as a great raconteur. In 1982 the *Village Voice*, probably for reasons of literary politics, published "Jerzy Kosinski's

Tainted Words," an attack accusing him of working for the CIA, misrepresenting his past, plagiarizing a pre-war Polish novelist, and hiring ghost writers to create his books. Mr. Sloan does not quote from that piece or give more than a quick summary of its contents. He points out that none of the alleged ghosts has ever emerged as a fiction writer, and that only one claimed to have done more than smooth Kosinski's unidiomatic English. The plagiarism charge, unless actual copying of the victim's text is found, can be dismissed as absurd. Creators have presumably been borrowing from their predecessors ever since the first yarn spinner sat by a cave fire explaining how the mammoth got away. Justified or not, the attack seriously disturbed Kosinski, and may have contributed to his suicide—although nine years seems a long delay in succumbing to public humiliation. Aside from the *Village Voice* omission—which rankles—Mr. Sloan's biography is a thorough, interesting, sympathetic account of a man who "lived in an age of incongruities" and became in consequence "actor, celebrity, and trickster . . . both less than a writer and more."

The Bürgermeister's Daughter

by Steven Ozment.

St. Martin's,

240 pages, \$23.95.

About 1525 the wealthy and influential bürgermeister of Schwäbisch Hall learned that his daughter Anna was juggling two lovers and had, during his absence, entertained one of them with a raid on the paternal wine cellar. He disinherited her. Anna, who was no meek maiden, sued. The action continued until her death, in 1552, with claims and counterclaims proceeding through the various courts available in the Holy Roman Empire—courts that often disagreed on their areas of jurisdiction and even viewed one another as rivals. Professor Ozment's reconstruction of this family money row develops into an account of the religious and social upheavals of the period and into analyses of inheritance law, the position of women, business practices, and local political chicanery. It is, in short, a very considerable history by an accomplished scholar, covering everything from women's hats to papal wars.

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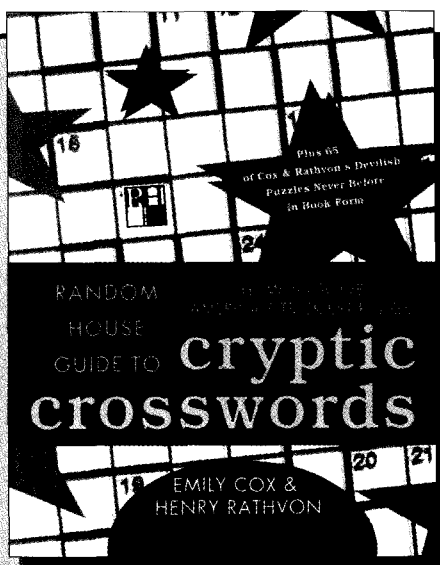
Edouard Manet

by Beth Archer Brombert.

Little, Brown,

528 pages, \$29.95.

Discretion was expected of a nineteenth-century gentleman, and the painter Manet (1832–1883) was a gentleman by birth who remained true to the standards of his class—to the restrained annoyance of his biographer. Ms. Brombert can only speculate about discontent with his fat wife, guilt over their illegiti-



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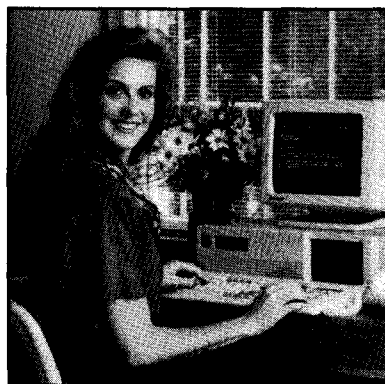
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mate son, and love affairs with women including Berthe Morisot. There is no evidence on any of those matters, and the biographer gives them rather too much space. What Ms. Brombert does very well indeed is to describe Manet's professional situation as a painter of contemporary life, much admired by his colleagues and much reviled by conservative and intemperate critics. The fury Manet aroused may have been caused in part by the mischievous question implied in one of his most famous works: Why is a naked female in an improbable setting and titled Venus a respectable nude, but a scandal if she is called Olympia and reclines on a modern bed? What are you fellows really admiring? It remains a question worth considering, although Manet's status as a great and innovative painter poses no question at all.

The Mediterranean Cat

by Hans Silvester.
Chronicle, 144 pages, \$29.95.

Mr. Silvester's new cats are as divertingly posed and as superbly photographed as those in his *Cats in the Sun*. He introduces them with an amiable reminiscence of his personal cats, but gives no information on how much watching and waiting lies behind his pictures.

Bella and Me

by Herblock.
Bonus Books, 47 pages,
\$12.95.

Visually, Bella is the zaniest cartoon feline since Crazy Kat. In character she combines recalcitrant teenager and severely demanding wife. One can only chuckle and wonder about the target of Herblock's amusing volley.

The Book of Secrets

by M. G. Vassanji.
Picador/St. Martin's,
352 pages, \$24.00.

Mr. Vassanji was born in East Africa and educated in the United States. His novel, set in his native country, presents a puzzle arising from the 1913 diary of a British colonial administrator and the descendants of people mentioned in that oddly surviving book. Perhaps more important, the story covers the history of

Indian-Muslim immigrants to East Africa from the First World War to the present, the tight-knit community they established, and the rise of one family from illiterate poverty in Dar es Salaam to wealth and status in London. The novel is well written, multi-layered, and teasingly inconclusive, and offers a view of an area seldom treated in fiction.

The Secret of the Incas

by William Sullivan.
Crown, 496 pages, \$35.00.

Mr. Sullivan candidly explains that his study was inspired by two books—Alexander Marshack's *The Roots of Civilization* and *Hamlet's Mill*, by Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend. The first demonstrates the enormous antiquity of moon-calendar keeping, and the second argues the factual content of myths. Mr. Sullivan sees Inca myth as a coded record of astronomical events with a bearing on Inca religion. He does not expect to be taken seriously by archaeologists, astronomers, anthropologists, or myth experts, and he probably won't be, but even if one assumes that the puzzle the author claims to have solved was of his own creation, his book is of interest as the record of an intellectual obsession.

True Love Waits

by Wendy Kaminer.
Addison-Wesley, 304 pages,
\$22.00.

Several of the essays in this collection originally appeared in *The Atlantic*.

The Ends of the Earth: A Journey at the Dawn of the 21st Century

by Robert D. Kaplan.
Random House, 496 pages, \$27.50.

Portions of this book first appeared in *The Atlantic*.

Asking for Love

by Roxana Robinson.
Random House, 288 pages,
\$23.00.

Several of the stories in this collection first appeared in *The Atlantic*.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams



THE PUZZLER

by Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon

Combination Lock

(Acknowledgments to Uncle Max, of
The Four-Star Puzzler)

The diagram represents a combination lock with 13 cylinders, each column representing one cylinder laid flat. Each column and each unbarred Across row will contain two words. The Across words are clued in order, but the Down clues have been given a spin and are completely randomized. When you've managed to fill the grid, it will be time to crack the combination. To do this, mentally rotate the cylinders so that the rows labeled 15 and 18 spell out a message of seven words (whose lengths are 2, 5, 4, 4, 3, 1, 7). This message will tell you what happens when the combination clicks and what we think you should do next. As an aid, the first cylinder (column 1) is already properly aligned. Clue answers include 13 capitalized words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14												
15												
16												
17												
18												
19												
20												

If you are entering this month's contest, simply mail our seven-word message on a postcard to "Combination Lock," *The Atlantic Monthly*, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116. (See further details on page 105.)

The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 121.

Across

1. Conjecture about a little pig (5)
People who act severe without taking leave (8)
14. Bird egg's back in English brew (5)
Before *Quiz Show* actor's in *Another Day* (8)
15. In a tire, nuts with a disinclination to budge (7)
Dream interpreter brought back clue, pocketing nickel (6)
16. Holding still at first, didn't like *Ran*? (6)
Satisfied with substance (7)
17. Sharply rattly convertible (6)
"Heart of Stone" penned by inferior songwriter (7)
18. Sitting in tree, almost state, "God" (6)
Article had been about understanding stirs (7)
19. Rev admitting one error with a coin (6)
Tale-telling family beheaded her feller? (7)

20. Duck behind school with your secret (8)
Trinket bearing message for courtier (5)

Down

- a. NYC area resembling an arbor? (6)
- b. Answer immediately after a wise woman (6)
- c. Camper's back of lot—come on in (6)
- d. Marine holding Latin mass in southern town (5)
- e. Boxing champ before uppercut finally landed (4)
- f. Say "Abrasive pulp" (6)
- g. Soberly help head of livestock into pen (7)
- h. Hospital show's getting great bits of work (4)
- i. Northerner in the skimobile (6)
- j. Cook's introduction to sweet roll (7)
- k. Horrible woman's advance, without PR (6)
- l. Devotion of baker in North America (6)
- m. Islander in a sack in the sound (5)
- n. Brazilian novelist with a crazy ring (5)
- o. Injurious words apt to be spoken in a hurry? (5)
- p. Love traveling Cremona (7)
- q. More pretentious crossbeam in a railroad (6)
- r. Ready for a permit including first of rules (5)
- s. Like a joke article in Spain that's icky (5)
- t. Reportedly, little bit of dust in ditch (4)
- u. WWII riveter got up around one (5)
- v. Mia Farrow role in *Dynasty*—nope (6)
- w. Active agent outside Russia's capital (4)
- x. A bit warmed up, hit some pitches (7)
- y. Inlet ultimately let in English river (5)
- z. Made better after 1,000 quit (5)

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped long envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

WORD WATCH

by Anne H. Soukhanov

corporate anorexia

noun, a company's loss of effectiveness due to excessive shrinkage through various cost-cutting measures: "'I don't know who first coined the term 'corporate anorexia,' but it is a danger,' says Jim Stanford, president of . . . a Calgary-based oil and gas giant that has gone through numerous downsizings and restructurings" (*Wall Street Journal*).

BACKGROUND: *Corporate anorexia* joins numerous other diet-related business idioms, such as *Slimfast budgeting*, *trimming the fat*, *corporate bloat*, and *lean and mean*. Associated with it are the terms *survivor syndrome* and *ghost worker*. Sufferers of *survivor syndrome* are overworked staff members remaining after a layoff, who simply become time-servers. *Ghost workers* are previously fired employees with critical insights into usually technical operations, who are rehired by their former companies as consultants to perform specialized tasks and solve complex problems.

dwelt time *noun*, the period spent by airline passengers in airports during flight delays: "[A] growing national problem . . . [is] time to kill at the airport. Congestion has lengthened 'dwelt time' about 5% a year in the 1990s. That leaves the typical domestic traveler warming an airport seat

A selection of terms that have newly been coined, that have recently acquired new currency, or that have taken on new meanings, compiled by the executive editor of The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition.

for 59 minutes because of flight delays, the usual connection problems and regular layover time" (*Wall Street Journal*).

BACKGROUND: *Dwell time* has generated another problem: *gate-lock*, the tendency of many passengers to *homestead* in departure lounges during flight delays, unwilling to leave the area for fear of missing their flight. To alleviate the burden of *dwell time* and to reduce *gate-lock*, some airports have installed putting greens, meditation rooms, and massage-therapy facilities near departure areas. The sense of *dwell* in this compound can be traced retrogressively through the word's etymology. The current meaning of *dwell*, "to make one's home in a place," derives from the word's 13th-century meaning, "to linger." This in turn developed from meanings in Old English: "to lead astray; to confuse" and "to hinder; to delay."

restorative justice

noun, an alternative concept in corrections according to which only violent career criminals would be imprisoned, while non-violent offenders would work in

closely monitored community projects, earning money with which to make financial restitution to their victims and their victims' families, to repay court and corrections costs, and to support their own families: "'With *restorative justice*, we hold offenders accountable and make the victim the center of the criminal justice process'" (Joseph Lehman, Maine's commissioner of corrections, in *The New York Times*).

BACKGROUND: Proponents of *restorative justice* estimate that 25 percent of the nation's criminal offenders could be repaying their debts to their victims and society by working, under electronic supervision, in a variety of settings—in emergency rooms, for example, or driving senior citizens to meals—and also receiving job training. Proponents make up an unlikely alliance, including wardens, academics, prison chaplains, lawmakers, and even some victims. The emergence of the concept and the term ("I've been talking *restorative justice* in Maine for years," Lehman says) is an anomaly in an era of harsher sentencing guidelines and a push toward building more prisons.

sitting volleyball *noun*, volleyball played by people with serious leg injuries or leg amputations, usually on an indoor court smaller than regulation size and with a net lower than standard height: "[In] Sarajevo . . . the game . . . is the sport of the future. It is *sitting volleyball*—played by men with damaged legs" (*Washington Post*).

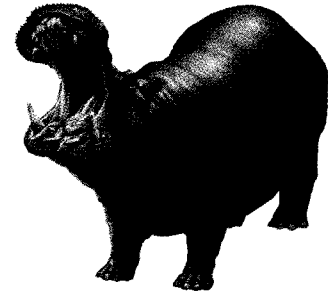
BACKGROUND: Also called *leg-less volleyball*, the sport can be traced back at least as far as the aftermath of the Vietnam War, when an American team composed chiefly of Vietnam veterans came into existence. *Sitting volleyball* has grown in popularity since 1992, when the latest Balkan strife began. Another term arising from this war is *turbo folk*, denoting a discordant blend of disco and traditional Serbian melodies with brooding, fatalistic lyrics expressive of Serbia's isolation and the emotional turbulence that attends civil war. *Turbo-folk* nightclubs are typically peopled by garishly dressed women and men toting guns. Serbia, one observer has written, is "a nation on the verge of a nervous breakdown. . . . And *turbo-folk* culture, something between gangsterism and a bad imitation of Madonna's Hollywood, is the most pronounced expression of this psychosis" (*Wall Street Journal*).





YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN AFRICA WHEN EVEN THE HERBIVORES ARE CARNIVORES.

Few topics can get a couple of Tanzanians arguing faster than that of which animal is the fiercest. "The black rhinoceros!" one will exclaim. "The mighty lion!" another will counter. This exchange will go on for quite some time, until a third person will chime in with "the malarial mosquito" and send everyone back to square one. While you could wait an eternity (or longer) for a winning beast to emerge, the easiest way to avoid local emergency rooms is to simply take the following few precautions.



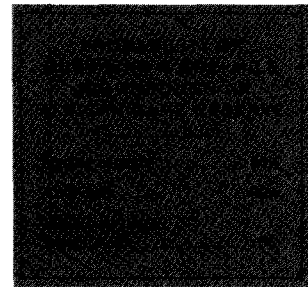
A F R I C A

Technically, a herbivore eats plants and a carnivore eats meat. But in Africa, what animal has time to split hairs? "Plant, schmant...that fellow in khaki looks pretty tasty!" In all honesty, you'd be best off simply avoiding conflict with either.

During our recent African safari (aka: toughest test drive in the world), we found the safest place in all the land was—all impartiality aside—the interior of the all new Nissan Pathfinder. With dual airbags and steel side-door guard beams, it provides a welcome layer of defense between one's tender posterior and the sharp tusks/horns/fangs normally found attached to wild animals. (Besides, where else on the Serengeti can you enjoy 6-speaker CD sound and automatic temperature control?)

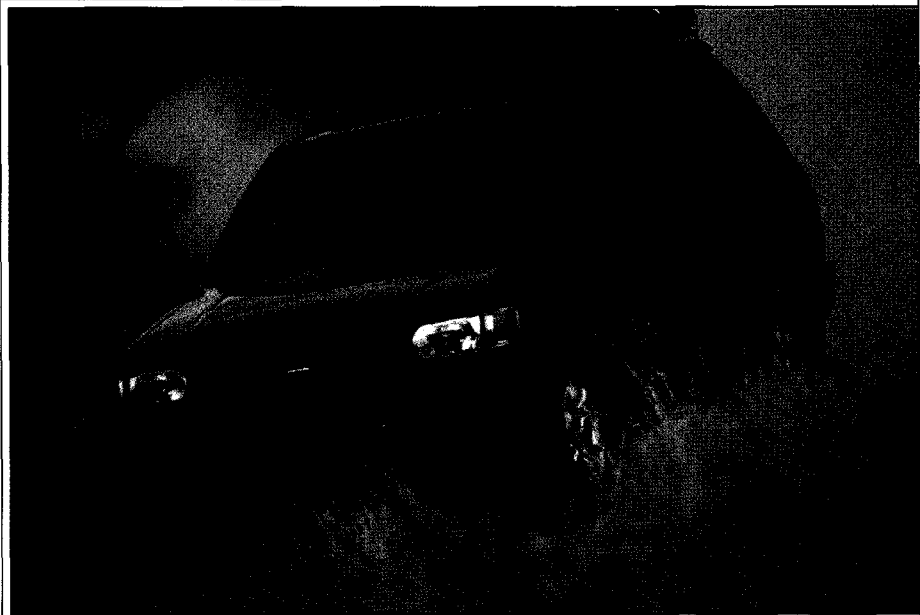
Of course, it's preferable never to find oneself on the wrong side of the wildlife to begin with. Two animals to be especially respectful of are 1) The very aggressive and acutely nearsighted black rhinoceros, who've been known to charge even dead tree trunks, and

2) Mother _____
(fill in the blank: hippos, elephants, baboons, etc.) who will do you great bodily harm should you get between them and their offspring.



Lastly, regardless of how hot the African sun gets, resist at all times the temptation to cool off in the lakes and streams you may encounter during your travels. We'd hate to lose a prospective

customer to a crocodile or, even worse, a hippo. (Which is, incidentally, the fiercest animal of them all.)



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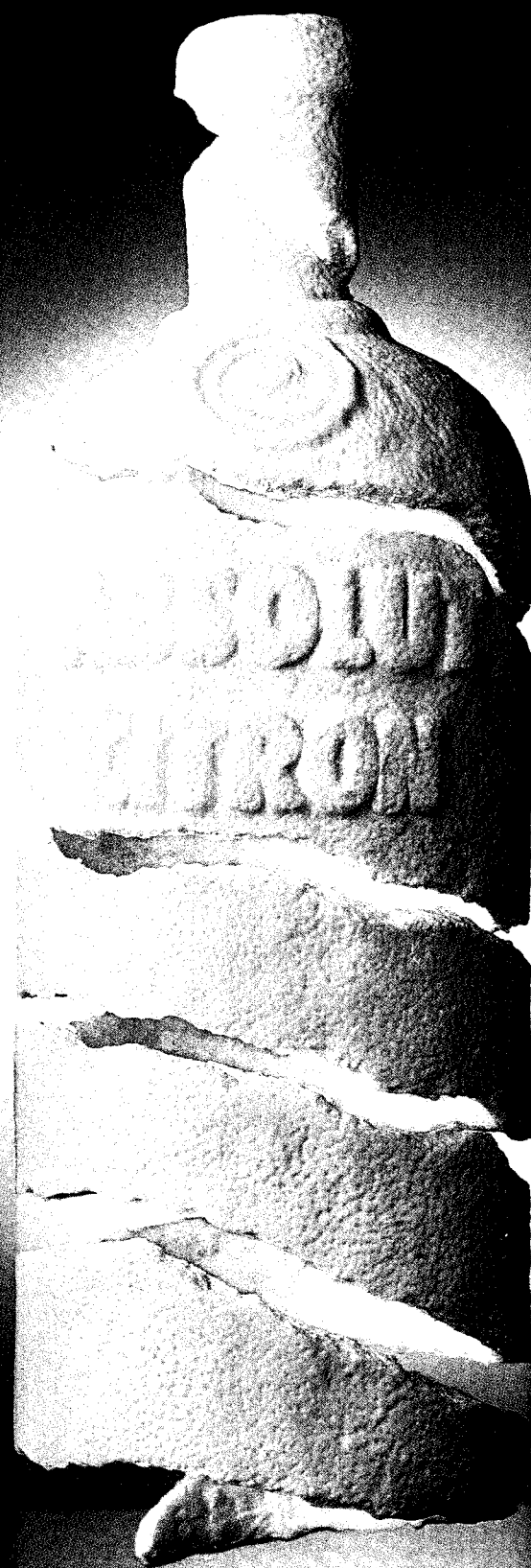
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